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THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

IN TWO VOLUMES

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R H E T O R I C

A N D

B E L L E S L E T T R E S.

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LECT.

LECTURE XVIII.

*Figurative Language — General Characters of
Style — Diffuse, Concise — Feeble, Nervous;—
Dry, Plain, Neat, Elegant, Flowery.*

HAVING treated, at considerable length, of the figures of speech, of their origin, of their nature, and of the management of such of them as are important enough to require a particular discussion, before finally dismissing this subject, I think it incumbent on me, to make some observations concerning the proper use of figurative language in general. These, indeed, I have, in part, already anticipated. But, as great errors are often committed in this part of style, especially by young writers, it may be of use that I bring together, under one view, the most material directions on this head.

I begin with repeating an observation formerly made, that neither all the beauties, nor even the chief beauties of composition, depend upon

tropes and figures. Some of the most sublime and most pathetic passages of the most admired authors, both in prose and poetry, are expressed in the most simple style, without any figure at all; instances of which I have before given. On the other hand, a composition may abound with these studied ornaments; the language may be artful, splendid, and highly figured, and yet the composition be on the whole frigid and unaffecting. Not to speak of sentiment and thought, which constitute the real and lasting merit of any work, if the style be stiff and affected, if it be deficient in perspicuity of precision, or in ease and neatness, all the figures that can be employed will never render it agreeable: they may dazzle a vulgar, but will never please a judicious eye.

In the second place, figures, in order to be beautiful, must always rise naturally from the subject. I have shown that all of them are the language either of imagination, or of passion; some of them suggested by imagination, when it is awakened and sprightly, such as metaphors and comparisons; others by passion or more heated emotion, such as personifications and apostrophes. Of course they are beautiful then only, when they are prompted by fancy, or by passion. They must rise of their own accord; they must flow from a mind warmed by the object which it seeks to describe; we should never interrupt the course of thought to cast about for figures. If they be sought after coolly,

and fastened on as designed ornaments, they will have a miserable effect. It is a very erroneous idea, which many have of the ornaments of style, as if they were things detached from the subject, and that could be stuck to it, like lace upon a coat: this is indeed,

Purpureus late qui splendeat unus aut alter
Affuitur pannus * — ARS POET.

And it is this false idea which has often brought attention to the beauties of writing into dispute. Whereas, the real and proper ornaments of style are wrought into the substance of it. They flow in the same stream with the current of thought. A writer of genius conceives his subject strongly; his imagination is filled and impressed with it, and pours itself forth in that figurative language which imagination naturally speaks. He puts on no emotion which his subject does not raise in him; he speaks as he feels; but his style will be beautiful, because his feelings are lively. On occasions, when fancy is languid, or finds nothing to rouse it, we should never attempt to hunt for figures. We then work, as it is said, “*invita Minerva* ;” supposing figures invented, they will have the appearance of being forced; and in this case, they had much better be wanted.

* “Schreds of purple with broad lustre shine,
“Sew’d on your poem.” FRANCIS.

In the third place, even when imagination prompts, and the subject naturally gives rise to figures, they must, however, not be employed too frequently. In all beauty, “*simplex munditiis*,” is a capital quality. Nothing derogates more from the weight and dignity of any composition, than too great attention to ornament. When the ornaments cost labor, that labor always appears; though they should cost us none, still the reader or hearer may be surfeited with them; and when they come too thick, they give the impression of a light and frothy genius, that evaporates in show, rather than brings forth what is solid. The directions of the ancient critics, on this head, are full of good sense, and deserve careful attention. “*Voluptatibus maximis*,” says Cicero, *de Orat* L. iii. “*fastidium finitimum est in rebus*” “*omnibus; quo hoc minus in oratione miremur.*” “*In qua vel ex poetis, vel oratoribus possumus*” “*judicare, concinnam, ornatam, festivam sine in-*” “*termissione, quamvis claris sit coloribus picta,*” “*vel poësis, vel oratio, non posse in delecta-*” “*tione esse diuturna.* Quare, bene & præclare,” “*quamvis nobis sæpe dicatur, belle & festive*” “*nimum sæpe nolo* *.” To the same purpose,

* “*In all human things, disgust borders so nearly on*” “*the most lively pleasures, that we need not be surprised*” “*to find this hold in eloquence. From reading either poets*” “*or orators, we may easily satisfy ourselves, that neither a*” “*poem nor an oration, which, without intermission is showy*” “*and sparkling, can please us long. ——— Wherefore,*

are the excellent directions with which Quinctilian concludes his discourse concerning figures, L. ix. C. 3. “ Ego illud de iis figuris quæ vere fiunt, “ adjiciam breviter, sicut ornant orationem oppor- “ tunæ positæ, ita ineptissimas esse cum im- “ modice petuntur. Sunt, qui neglecto rerum “ pondere & viribus sententiarum, si vel inania “ verba in hos modos depravarunt, summos se “ judicant artifices; ideoque non desinunt eas “ neclere; quas sine sententia seclare, tam est “ ridiculum quam quærere habitum gestumque “ sine corpore. Ne hæ quidem quæ rectæ sunt, “ densandæ sunt nimis. Sciendum imprimis quid “ quisque postulet locus, quid persona, quid “ tempus. Major enim pars harum figurarum “ posita est in delectatione. Ubi vero, atrocitate, “ invidia, miseratione pugnandum est; quis ferat “ verbis contraposis, & consimilibus, & pariter “ cadentibus, irascentem, flentem, rogantem? “ Cum in his rebus, cura verborum deroget “ affectibus fidem; & ubicunque ars ostentatur, “ veritas abesse videatur*.” After these judicious

“ though we may wish for the frequent praise of having “ expressed ourselves well and properly, we should not covet “ repeated applause, for being bright and splendid.”

* “ I must add, concerning those figures which are proper “ in themselves, that as they beautify a composition when they “ are seasonably introduced, so they deform it greatly, if “ too frequently sought after. There are some, who, neglect- “ ing strength of sentiment and weight of matter, if they can “ only force their empty words into a figurative style, imagine

and useful observations, I have no more to add, on this subject, except this admonition.

In the fourth place, that without a genius for figurative language, none should attempt it. Imagination is a power not to be acquired; it must be derived from nature. Its redundancies we may prune, its deviations we may correct, its sphere we may enlarge; but the faculty itself we cannot create: and all efforts towards a metaphorical ornamented style, if we are destitute of the proper genius for it, will prove awkward and disgusting. Let us satisfy ourselves, however, by considering, that without this talent, or at least with a very small measure of it, we may both write and speak to advantage. Good sense, clear ideas, perspicuity of language, and proper arrangement of words and thoughts, will always command attention. These are indeed the foundations

“ themselves great writers; and therefore continually string
“ together such ornaments; which is just as ridiculous, where
“ there is no sentiment to support them, as to contrive gestures
“ and dresses for what wants a body. Even those figures which
“ a subject admits, must not come too thick. We must begin,
“ with considering what the occasion, the time, and the
“ person who speaks, render proper. For the object aimed
“ at by the greater part of these figures, is entertainment.
“ But when the subject becomes deeply serious and strong
“ passions are to be moved, who can bear the orator, who, in
“ affected language and balanced phrases, endeavours to express
“ wrath, commiseration, or earnest entreaty? On all such
“ occasions, a solicitous attention to words weakens passion;
“ and when so much art is shown, there is suspected to be
“ little sincerity. ”

of all solid merit, both in speaking and writing. Many subjects require nothing more; and those which admit of ornament, admit it only as a secondary requisite. To study and to know our own genius well; to follow nature; to seek to improve, but not to force it, are directions which cannot be too often given to those who desire to excel in the liberal arts.

When I entered on the consideration of style, I observed that words being the copies of our ideas, there must always be a very intimate connexion between the manner in which every writer employs words, and his manner of thinking; and that, from the peculiarity of thought and expression which belongs to him, there is a certain character imprinted on his style, which may be denominated his manner; commonly expressed by such general terms, as strong, weak, dry, simple, affected, or the like. These distinctions carry, in general, some reference to an author's manner of thinking, but refer chiefly to his mode of expression. They arise from the whole tenor of his language; and comprehend the effect produced by all those parts of style which we have already considered; the choice which he makes of single words; his arrangement of these in sentences; the degree of his precision; and his embellishment, by means of musical cadence, figures, or other arts of speech. Of such general characters of style, therefore, it remains now to speak, as the result of those underparts of which I have hitherto treated.

That different subjects require to be treated of in different sorts of style, is a position so obvious, that I shall not stay to illustrate it. Every one sees that treatises of philosophy, for instance, ought not to be composed in the same style with orations. Every one sees also, that different parts of the same composition require a variation in the style and manner. In a sermon, for instance, or any harangue, the application or peroration admits more ornament, and requires more warmth, than the didactic part. But what I mean at present to remark is, that amidst this variety, we still expect to find, in the compositions of any one man, some degree of uniformity or consistency with himself in manner; we expect to find some predominant character of style impressed on all his writings, which shall be suited to, and shall mark, his particular genius, and turn of mind. The orations in Livy differ much in style, as they ought to do, from the rest of his history. The same is the case with those in Tacitus. Yet both in Livy's orations, and in those of Tacitus, we are able clearly to trace the distinguishing manner of each historian; the magnificent fullness of the one, and the sententious conciseness of the other. The "Lettres Persanes," and "L'Esprit des Loix," are the works of the same author. They required very different composition surely, and accordingly they differ widely; yet still we see the same hand. Wherever there is real and native genius, it gives a determination to one kind of style rather than to

another. Where nothing of this appears; where there is no marked nor peculiar character in the compositions of any author, we are apt to infer, not without reason, that he is a vulgar and trivial author, who writes from imitation, and not from the impulse of original genius. As the most celebrated painters are known by their hand, so the best and most original writers are known and distinguished, throughout all their works, by their style and peculiar manner. This will be found to hold almost without exception.

The ancient critics attended to these general characters of style which we are now to consider. Dionysius of Halicarnassus divides them into three kinds; and calls them the austere, the florid, and the middle. By the austere, he means a style distinguished for strength and firmness, with a neglect of smoothness and ornament; for examples of which, he gives Pindar and Æschylus among the poets, and Thucydides among the prose-writers. By the florid, he means, as the name indicates, a style ornamented, flowing, and sweet; resting more upon numbers and grace, than strength; he instances Hesiod, Sappho, Anacreon, Euripides, and principally Isocrates. The middle kind is the just mean between these, and comprehends the beauties of both; in which class he places Homer and Sophocles among the poets; in prose, Herodotus, Demosthenes, Plato, and (what seems strange) Aristotle. This must be a very wide class indeed, which comprehends Plato and Aristotle under

one article as to style *. Cicero and Quinctilian make also a threefold division of style, though with respect to different qualities of it; in which they are followed by most of the modern writers on Rhetoric; the *simplex*, *tenue*, or *subtile*; the *grave* or *vehemens*; and the *medium*, or, *temperatum genus dicendi*. But these divisions and the illustrations they give of them, are so loose and general, that they cannot advance us much in our ideas of style. I shall endeavour to be a little more particular in what I have to say on this subject.

One of the first and most obvious distinctions of the different kinds of style, is what arises from an author's spreading out his thoughts more or less. This distinction forms, what are called the diffuse and the concise styles. A concise writer compresses his thought into the fewest possible words; he seeks to employ none but such as are most expressive; he lops off, as redundant, every expression which does not add something material to the sense. Ornament he does not reject; he may be lively and figured; but his ornament is intended for the sake of force, rather than grace. He never gives you the same thought twice. He places it in the light which appears to him the most striking, but if you do not apprehend it well in that light, you need not expect to find it in any other. His sentences are arranged with compactness and strength, rather

* De Compositione Verborum, Cap. 25.

than with cadence and harmony. The utmost precision is studied in them ; and they are commonly designed to suggest more to the reader's imagination than they directly express.

A diffuse writer unfolds his thought fully. He places it in a variety of lights, and gives the reader every possible assistance for understanding it completely. He is not very careful to express it at first in its full strength ; because he is to repeat the impression ; and what he wants in strength, he proposes to supply by copiousness. Writers of this character generally love magnificence and amplification. Their periods naturally run out into some length, and having room for ornament of every kind, they admit it freely.

Each of these manners has its peculiar advantages ; and each becomes faulty when carried to the extreme. The extreme of conciseness becomes abrupt and obscure ; it is apt also to lead into a style too pointed, and bordering on the epigrammatic. The extreme diffuseness becomes weak and languid, and tires the reader. However, to one or other of these two manners, a writer may lean according as his genius prompts him : and under the general character of a concise, or of a more open and diffuse style, may possess much beauty in his composition.

For illustrations of these general characters, I can only refer to the writers who are examples of them. It is not so much from detached passages, such as I was wont formerly to quote for instances, as from the current of an author's style, that we

are to collect the idea of a formed manner of writing. The two most remarkable examples that I know, of conciseness carried as far as propriety will allow, perhaps in some cases farther, are Tacitus the historian, and the president Montesquieu in "*L'Esprit des Loix*." Aristotle, too, holds an eminent rank among didactic writers for his brevity. Perhaps no writer in the world was ever so frugal of his words as Aristotle; but this frugality of expression frequently darkens his meaning. Of a beautiful and magnificent diffuseness, Cicero is, beyond doubt, the most illustrious instance that can be given. Addison also, and Sir William Temple, come in some degree under this class.

In judging when it is proper to lean to the concise, and when to the diffuse manner; we must be directed by the nature of the composition. Discourses that are to be spoken, require a more copious style, than books that are to be read. When the whole meaning must be caught from the mouth of the speaker, without the advantage which books afford of pausing at pleasure, and reviewing what appears obscure, great conciseness is always to be avoided. We should never presume too much on the quickness of our hearer's understanding; but our style ought to be such, that the bulk of men can go along with us easily, and without effort. A flowing copious style, therefore, is required in all public speakers; guarding, at the same time, against such a degree of diffusion, as renders them languid and

tiresome; which will always prove the case, when they inculcate too much, and present the same thought under too many different views.

In written compositions, a certain degree of conciseness possesses great advantages. It is more lively; keeps up attention; makes a brisker and stronger impression; and gratifies the mind by supplying more exercise to a reader's own thought. A sentiment, which, expressed diffusely, will barely be admitted to be just, expressed concisely, will be admired as spirited. Description, when we want to have it vivid and animated, should be in a concise strain. This is different from the common opinion; most persons being ready to suppose, that upon description a writer may dwell more safely than upon other things, and that by a full and extended style, it is rendered more rich and expressive. I apprehend, on the contrary, that a diffuse manner generally weakens it. Any redundant words or circumstances encumber the fancy, and make the object we present to it, appear confused and indistinct. Accordingly, the most masterly describers, Homer, Tacitus, Milton, are almost always concise in their descriptions. They show us more of an object at one glance, than a feeble diffuse writer can show, by turning it round and round in a variety of lights. The strength and vivacity of description, whether in prose or poetry, depend much more upon the happy choice of one or two striking circumstances, than upon the multiplication of them.

Addreses to the passions, likewise, ought to be in the concise, rather than the diffuse manner. In these, it is dangerous to be diffuse, because it is very difficult to support proper warmth for any length of time. When we become prolix, we are always in hazard of cooling the reader. The heart, too, and the fancy run fast; and if once we can put them in motion, they supply many particulars to greater advantage than an author can display them. The case is different, when we address ourselves to the understanding; as in all matters of reasoning, explication, and instruction. There I would prefer a more free and diffuse manner. When you are to strike the fancy, or to move the heart, be concise; when you are to inform the understanding, which moves more slowly, and requires the assistance of a guide, it is better to be full. Historical narration may be beautiful, either in a concise or diffuse manner, according to the writer's genius. Livy and Herodotus are diffuse; Thucydides and Sallust are succinct; yet all of them agreeable.

I observed that a diffuse style inclines most to long periods; and a concise writer, it is certain, will often employ short sentences. It is not, however, to be inferred from this, that long or short sentences are fully characteristic of the one or the other manner. It is very possible for one to compose always in short sentences, and to be withal extremely diffuse, if a small measure of sentiment be spread through many of these

sentences. Seneca is a remarkable example. By the shortness and quaintness of his sentences, he may appear at first view very concise; yet he is far from being so. He transfigures the same thought into many different forms. He makes it pass for a new one, only by giving it a new turn. So also, most of the French writers compose in short sentences, though their style, in general, is not concise; commonly less so than the bulk of English writers, whose sentences are much longer. A French author breaks down into two or three sentences, that portion of thought which an English author crowds into one. The direct effect of short sentences, is to render the style brisk and lively, but not always concise. By the quick successive impulses which they make on the mind, they keep it awake; and give to composition more of a spirited character. Long periods, like Lord Clarendon's, are grave and stately, but, like all grave things, they are in hazard of becoming dull. An intermixture of both long and short ones is requisite, when we would support solemnity, together with vivacity; leaning more to the one or the other, according as propriety requires, that the solemn or the sprightly should be predominant in our composition. But of long and short sentences, I had occasion, formerly, to treat under the head of the construction of periods.

The nervous and the feeble, are generally held to be characters of style, of the same import with the concise and the diffuse. They do indeed

very often coincide, Diffuse writers have for the most part some degree of feebleness; and nervous writers will generally be inclined to a concise expression. This, however, does not always hold; and there are instances of writers, who, in the midst of a full and ample style, have maintained a great degree of strength. Livy is an example; and in the English language, Dr. Barrow. Barrow's style has many faults. It is unequal, incorrect and redundant; but withal, for force and expressiveness uncommonly distinguished. On every subject, he multiplies words with an overflowing copiousness; but it is always a torrent of strong ideas and significant expressions which he pours forth. Indeed, the foundations of a nervous or a weak style are laid in an author's manner of thinking. If he conceives an object strongly, he will express it with energy: but, if he has only an indistinct view of his subject; if his ideas be loose and wavering; if his genius be such, or, at the time of his writing, so carelessly exerted, that he has no firm hold of the conception which he would communicate to us; the marks of this will clearly appear in his style. Several unmeaning words and loose epithets will be found; his expressions will be vague and general; his arrangement indistinct and feeble; we shall conceive somewhat of his meaning, but our conception will be faint. Whereas a nervous writer, whether he employs an extended or a concise style, gives us always a strong impression of his meaning; his mind is
full

full of his subject, and his words are all expressive; every phrase and every figure which he uses, tends to render the picture, which he would set before us, more lively and complete.

I observed, under the head of diffuse and concise style, that an author might lean either to the one or to the other, and yet be beautiful. This is not the case with respect to the nervous and the feeble. Every author, in every composition, ought to study to express himself with some strength, and, in proportion, as he approaches to the feeble, he becomes a bad writer. In all kinds of writing, however, the same degree of strength is not demanded. But the more grave and weighty any composition is, the more should a character of strength predominate in the style. Hence in history, philosophy, and solemn discourses, it is expected most. One of the most complete models of a nervous style, is Demosthenes in his orations.

As every good quality in style has an extreme, when pursued to which it becomes faulty, this holds of the nervous style as well as others. Too great a study of strength, to the neglect of the other qualities of style, is found to betray writers into a harsh manner. Harshness arises from unusual words, from forced inversions in the construction of a sentence, and too much neglect of smoothness and ease. This is reckoned the fault of some of our earliest classics in the English language; such as Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Bacon, Hooker, Chillingworth, Milton in his

prose-works, Harrington, Cudworth, and other writers of considerable note in the days of Queen Elizabeth, James I. and Charles I. These writers had nerves and strength in a high degree, and are to this day eminent for that quality in style. But the language in their hands was exceedingly different from what it is now, and was, indeed, entirely formed upon the idiom and construction of the Latin, in the arrangement of sentences. Hooker, for instance, begins the preface to his celebrated work of Ecclesiastical Polity, with the following sentence: "Though for no other
"cause, yet for this, that posterity may know
"we have not loosely, through silence, permitted
"things to pass away as in dream, there shall
"be, for men's information, extant this much,
"concerning the present state of the church of
"God established amongst us, and their careful
"endeavours which would have upheld the
"same." Such a sentence now sounds harsh in our ears. Yet some advantages certainly attended this sort of style; and whether we have gained, or lost, upon the whole, by departing from it, may bear a question. By the freedom of arrangement, which it permitted, it rendered the language susceptible of more strength, of more variety of collocation, and more harmony of period. But however this be, such a style is now obsolete; and no modern writer could adopt it without the censure of harshness and affectation. The present form which the language has assumed, has, in some measure, sacrificed the

study of strength to that of perspicuity and ease. Our arrangement of words has become less forcible, perhaps, but more plain and natural: and this is now understood to be the genius of our language.

The restoration of King Charles II. seems to be the era of the formation of our present style. Lord Clarendon was one of the first who laid aside those frequent inversions which prevailed among writers of the former age. After him, Sir William Temple, polished the language still more. But the author, who, by the number and reputation of his works, formed it more than any one, into its present state, is Dryden. Dryden began to write at the restoration, and continued long an author both in poetry and prose. He had made the language his study; and though he wrote hastily, and often incorrectly, and his style is not free from faults, yet there is a richness in his diction, a copiousness, ease, and variety in his expression, which has not been surpassed by any who have come after him*. Since his time, considerable attention has been paid to

* Dr. Johnson, in his life of Dryden, gives the following character of his prose style: "His prefaces have not the
"formality of a settled style, in which the first half of the
"sentence betrays the other. The clauses are never balanced,
"nor the periods modelled; every word seems to drop by
"chance, though it falls into its proper place. Nothing is
"cold or languid; the whole is airy, animated, and vigorous;
"what is little, is gay; what is great, is splendid. Though all
"is easy, nothing is feeble; though all seems careless, there

purity and elegance of style: But it is elegance, rather than strength, that forms the distinguishing quality of most of the good English writers. Some of them compose in a more manly and nervous manner than others; but whether it be from the genius of our language, or from whatever other cause, it appears to me, that we are far from the strength of several of the Greek and Roman authors.

Hitherto we have considered style under those characters that respect its expressiveness of an author's meaning. Let us now proceed to consider it in another view, with respect to the degree of ornament employed to beautify it. Here, the style of different authors seems to rise, in the following gradation: a dry, a plain, a neat, an elegant, a flowery manner. Of each of these in their order.

First, a dry manner. This excludes all ornament of every kind. Content with being understood, it has not the least aim to please, either the fancy or the ear. This is tolerable only in pure didactic writing; and even there, to make us bear it, great weight and solidity of matter is requisite; and entire perspicuity of language. Aristotle is the thorough example of a dry style. Never, perhaps, was there any author who adhered so rigidly to the strictness

“ is nothing harsh; and though since his earlier works, more
“ than a century has passed, they have nothing yet uncouth
“ or obsolete.”

of a didactic manner, throughout all his writings, and conveyed so much instruction without the least approach to ornament. With the most profound genius, and extensive views, he writes like a pure intelligence, who addresses himself solely to the understanding, without making any use of the channel of the imagination. But this is a manner which deserves not to be imitated. For, although the goodness of the matter may compensate the dryness or harshness of the style, yet is that dryness a considerable defect; as it fatigues attention, and conveys our sentiments, with disadvantage, to the reader or hearer.

A plain style rises one degree above a dry one. A writer of this character, employs very little ornament of any kind, and rests, almost, entirely upon his sense. But, if he is at no pains to engage us by the employment of figures, musical arrangement, or any other art of writing, he studies, however, to avoid disgusting us like a dry and a harsh writer. Besides perspicuity, he pursues propriety, purity, and precision, in his language; which form one degree, and no inconsiderable one, of beauty. Liveliness too, and force, may be consistent with a very plain style: and, therefore, such an author, if his sentiments be good, may be abundantly agreeable. The difference between a dry and plain writer, is, that the former is incapable of ornament, and seems not to know what it is; the latter seeks not after it. He gives us his meaning, in good language, distinct and pure; any further ornament

he gives himself no trouble about ; either, because he thinks it unnecessary to his subject ; or, because his genius does not lead him to delight in it ; or, because it leads him to despise it*.

This last was the case with Dean Swift, who may be placed at the head of those that have employed the plain style. Few writers have discovered more capacity. He treats every subject which he handles, whether serious or ludicrous, in a masterly manner. He knew, almost, beyond any man, the purity, the extent, the precision of the English language ; and, therefore, to such as wish to attain a pure and correct style, he is one of the most useful models. But we must not look for much ornament and grace in his language. His haughty and morose genius, made him despise any embellishment of this kind as beneath his dignity. He delivers his sentiments in a plain, downright, positive manner, like one who is sure he is in the right ; and is very indifferent whether you be pleased or not. His sentences are commonly negligently arranged ; distinctly enough as to the sense ; but, without

* On this head, of the general characters of style, particularly, the plain and the simple, and the characters of those English authors who are classed under them, in this, and the following lecture, several ideas have been taken from a manuscript treatise on rhetoric, part of which was shown to me, many years ago, by the learned and ingenious author, Dr. Adam Smith ; and which, it is hoped, will be given by him to the public.

any regard to smoothness of sound; often without much regard to compactness, or elegance. If a metaphor, or any other figure, chanced to render his satire more poignant, he would, perhaps, vouchsafe to adopt it, when it came in his way; but if it tended only to embellish and illustrate, he would rather throw it aside. Hence, in his serious pieces, his style often borders upon the dry and unpleasing, in his humorous ones, the plainness of his manner gives his wit a singular edge, and sets it off to the highest advantage. There is no froth, nor affectation in it; it flows without any studied preparation; and while he hardly appears to smile himself, he makes his reader laugh heartily. To a writer of such a genius as Dean Swift, the plain style was most admirably fitted. Among our philosophical writers, Mr. Locke comes under this class; perspicuous and pure, but almost without any ornament whatever. In works which admit, or require, ever so much ornament, there are parts where the plain manner ought to predominate. But we must remember, that when this is the character which a writer affects throughout his whole composition, great weight of matter, and great force of sentiment, are required, in order to keep up the reader's attention, and prevent him from tiring of the author.

What is called a neat style comes next in order; and here we are got into the region of ornament; but that ornament not of the highest or most sparkling kind. A writer of this character

shows, that he does not despise the beauty of language. It is an object of his attention. But his attention is shown in the choice of his words, and in a graceful collocation of them; rather than in any high efforts of imagination, or eloquence. His sentences are always clean, and free from the encumbrance of superfluous words; of a moderate length; rather inclining to brevity, than a swelling structure; closing with propriety; without any tails, or adjections dragging after the proper close. His cadence is varied; but not of the studied musical kind. His figures, if he uses any, are short and correct; rather than bold and glowing. Such a style as this, may be attained by a writer who has no great powers of fancy or genius; by industry merely, and careful attention to the rules of writing; and it is a style always agreeable. It imprints a character of moderate elevation on our composition, and carries a decent degree of ornament, which is not unsuitable to any subject whatever. A familiar letter, or a law paper, on the driest subject, may be written with neatness; and a sermon, or a philosophical treatise, in a neat style, will be read with pleasure.

An elegant style is a character, expressing a higher degree of ornament than a neat one; and, indeed, is the term usually applied to style, when possessing all the virtues of ornament, without any of its excesses or defects. From what has been formerly delivered, it will easily be understood, that complete elegance implies great perspicuity

and propriety; purity in the choice of words, and care and dexterity in their harmonious and happy arrangement. It implies, farther, the grace and beauty of imagination spread over style, as far as the subject admits it; and all the illustration which figurative language adds, when properly employed. In a word, an elegant writer is one who pleases the fancy and the ear, while he informs the understanding, and who gives us his ideas clothed with all the beauty of expression, but not over-charged with any of its misplaced finery. In this class, therefore, we place only the first rate writers in the language; such as, Addison, Dryden, Pope, Temple, Bolingbroke, Atterbury, and a few more: writers who differ widely from one another in many of the attributes of style, but whom we now class together, under the denomination of elegant, as in the scale of ornament, possessing nearly the same place.

When the ornaments applied to style, are too rich and gaudy in proportion to the subject; when they return upon us too fast, and strike us either with a dazzling lustre, or a false brilliancy, this forms what is called a florid style; a term commonly used to signify the excess of ornament. In a young composer this is very pardonable. Perhaps, it is even a promising symptom in young people, that their style should incline to the florid and luxuriant: “Volo se
“ efferat in adolescente fecunditas,” says Quintilian, “multum inde decoquent anni, multum
“ ratio limabit, aliquid velut usu ipso deteretur;

“ fit modo unde excidi possit quid & exculpi. —
 “ Audeat hæc ætas plura & inveniat & inventis
 “ gaudeat; sint licet illa non satis interim sicca &
 “ severa. Facile remedium est ubertatis: sterilia
 “ nullo labore vincuntur*.” But although the
 florid style may be allowed to youth, in their
 first essays, it must not receive the same indul-
 gence from writers of maturer years. It is to
 be expected, that judgment, as it ripens, should
 chasten imagination, and reject, as juvenile, all
 such ornaments as are redundant, unsuitable to
 the subject, or not conducive to illustrate it.
 Nothing can be more contemptible than that tin-
 sel splendor of language, which some writers
 perpetually affect. It were well, if this could be
 ascribed to the real overflowing of a rich imagin-
 ation. We should then have something to amuse
 us, at least, if we found little to instruct us.
 But the worst is, that with those frothy writers,
 it is a luxuriancy of words, not of fancy. We
 see a labored attempt to rise to a splendor of
 composition, of which they have formed to

* “ In youth, I wish to see luxuriancy of fancy appear.
 “ Much of it will be diminished by years; much will be
 “ corrected by ripening judgment; some of it, by the mere
 “ practice of composition, will be worn away. Let there be
 “ only sufficient matter, at first, that can bear some pruning
 “ and lopping off. At this time of life, let genius be bold and
 “ inventive, and pride itself in its efforts, though these should
 “ not, as yet be correct. Luxuriancy can easily be cured; but
 “ for barrenness there is no remedy.”

themselves some loose idea; but having no strength of genius for attaining it, they endeavour to supply the defect by poetical words, by cold exclamations, by common-place figures, and every thing that has the appearance of pomp and magnificence. It has escaped these writers, that sobriety in ornament, is one great secret for rendering it pleasing; and that, without a foundation of good sense and solid thought, the most florid style is but a childish imposition on the public. The public, however, are but too apt to be so imposed on; at least, the mob of readers, who are very ready to be caught, at first, with whatever is dazzling and gaudy.

I cannot help thinking, that it reflects more honor on the religious turn, and good dispositions of the present age, than on the public taste, that Mr. Hervey's Meditations have had so great a currency. The pious and benevolent heart, which is always displayed in them, and the lively fancy which, on some occasions, appears, justly merited applause: but the perpetual glitter of expression, the swollen imagery, and strained description which abound in them, are ornaments of a false kind. I would, therefore, advise students of oratory to imitate Mr. Hervey's piety, rather than his style; and, in all compositions of a serious kind, to turn their attention, as Mr. Pope says, "from sounds to things, from fancy
"to the heart." Admonitions of this kind, I have already had occasion to give, and may hereafter repeat them; as I conceive nothing more

incumbent on me in this course of lectures, than to take every opportunity of cautioning my readers against the affected and frivolous use of ornament; and, instead of that flight and superficial taste in writing, which I apprehend to be at present too fashionable, to introduce, as far as my endeavours can avail, a taste for more solid thought, and more manly simplicity in style.

LECTURE XIX.

General Characters of Style — Simple, Affected, Vehement — Directions for forming a Proper Style.

HAVING entered in the last lecture on the consideration of the general characters of style, I treated of the concise and diffuse, the nervous and feeble manner. I considered style also, with relation to the different degrees of ornament employed to beautify it; in which view, the manner of different authors rises according to the following gradation: dry, plain, neat, elegant, flowery.

I am next to treat of style under another character, one of great importance in writing and which requires to be accurately examined, that of simplicity, or a natural style, as distinguished from affectation. Simplicity, applied to writing, is a term very frequently used; but, like many other critical terms often used loosely and without precision. This has been owing chiefly to the different meanings given to the word simplicity,

which, therefore, it will be necessary here to distinguish; and to show in what sense it is a proper attribute of style. We may remark four different acceptations in which it is taken.

The first is, simplicity of composition, as opposed to too great a variety of parts. Horace's precept refers to this:

Denique sit quod vis simplex
duntaxat & unum*.

This is the simplicity of plan in a tragedy, as distinguished from double plots, and crowded incidents: the simplicity of the Iliad, or Æneid, in opposition to the digressions of Lucan, and the scattered tales of Ariosto; the simplicity of Grecian architecture, in opposition to the irregular variety of the Gothic. In this sense, simplicity is the same with unity.

The second sense is, simplicity of thought, as opposed to refinement. Simple thoughts are what arise naturally; what the occasion, or the subject suggest unsought; and what, when once suggested, are easily apprehended by all. Refinement in writing, expresses a less natural and obvious train of thought, and which it required a peculiar turn of genius to pursue; within certain bounds very beautiful, but when carried too far,

* "Then learn the wand'ring humor to control,

"And keep one equal tenor through the whole."

FRANCIS.

approaching to intricacy, and hurting us by the appearance of being *recherché*, or far sought. Thus, we would naturally say, that Mr. Parnell is a poet of far greater simplicity, in his turn of thought, than M. Cowley: Cicero's thoughts on moral subjects are natural; Seneca's too refined and labored. In these two senses of simplicity, when it is opposed either to variety of parts, or to refinement of thought, it has no proper relation to style.

There is a third sense of simplicity, in which it has respect to style; and stands opposed to too much ornament, or pomp of language; as when we say, Mr. Locke is a simple, Mr. Hervey a florid, writer; and it is in this sense, that the "*simplex*," the "*tenue*," or "*subtile genus dicendi*," is understood by Cicero and Quinctilian. The simple style, in this sense, coincides with the plain or the neat style, which I before mentioned; and, therefore, requires no farther illustration.

But there is a fourth sense of simplicity, also respecting style; but not respecting the degree of ornament employed, so much as the easy and natural manner in which our language expresses our thoughts. This is quite different from the former sense of the word just now mentioned, in which simplicity was equivalent to plainness: whereas, in this sense, it is compatible with the highest ornament. Homer, for instance, possesses this simplicity in the greatest perfection; and yet no writer has more ornament and beauty. This

simplicity, which is what we are now to consider, stands opposed, not to ornament, but to affectation of ornament, or appearance of labor about our style; and it is a distinguished excellency in writing.

A writer of simplicity expresses himself in such a manner, that every one thinks he could have written in the same way; Horace describes it,

ut sibi quivis

Speret idem, fudet multum, frustra que
laboret
Ausus idem*.

There are no marks of art in his expression; it seems the very language of nature; you see in the style, not the writer and his labor, but the man, in his own natural character. He may be rich in his expression; he may be full of figures, and of fancy; but these flow from him without effort; and he appears to write in this manner, not because he has studied it, but because it is the manner of expression most natural to him. A certain degree of negligence, also, is not inconsistent with this character of style, and even not ungraceful in it; for too minute an attention to

- * "From well-known tales such fictions would I raise,
"As all might hope to imitate with ease;
"Yet, while they strive the same success to gain,
"Should find their labors, and their hopes in vain."

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to words is foreign to it: "Habeat ille," says Cicero, (Orat. No. 77.) "molle quiddam, & quod indicet non ingratham negligentiam hominis, de re magis quam de verbo laborantis. *"

This is the great advantage of simplicity of style, that, like simplicity of manners, it shows us a man's sentiments and turn of mind laid open without disguise. More studied and artificial manners of writing, however beautiful, have always this disadvantage, that they exhibit an author in form, like a man at court, where the splendor of dress, and the ceremonial of behaviour, conceal those peculiarities which distinguish one man from another. But reading an author of simplicity, is like conversing with a person of distinction at home, and with ease, where we find natural manners, and a marked character.

The highest degree of this simplicity, is expressed by a French term, to which we have none that fully answers in our language, *naïveté*. It is not easy to give a precise idea of the import of this word. It always expresses a discovery of character. I believe the best account of it is given by a French critic, M. Marmontel, who explains it thus: That sort of amiable ingenuity, or undisguised openness, which seems to give us some degree of superiority over the person who shows it; a certain infantine simplicity, which we love in

* "Let this style have a certain softness and ease, which shall characterize a negligence, not unpleasing in an author, who appears to be more solicitous about the thought than the expression."

our hearts, but which displays some features of the character that we think we could have art enough to hide; and which, therefore, always leads us to smile at the person who discovers this character. La Fontaine, in his Fables, is given as the great example of such *naïveté*. This however, is to be understood, as descriptive of a particular species only of simplicity.

With respect to simplicity, in general, we may remark, that the ancient original writers are always the most eminent for it. This happens from a plain reason, that they wrote from the dictates of natural genius, and were not formed upon the labors and writings of others, which is always in hazard of producing affectation. Hence, among the Greek writers, we have more models of a beautiful simplicity than among the Roman. Homer, Hesiod, Anacreon, Theocritus, Herodotus, and Xenophon, are all distinguished for it. Among the Romans also, we have some writers of this character, particularly Terence, Lucretius, Phædrus, and Julius Cæsar. The following passage of Terence's *Andria*, is a beautiful instance of simplicity of manner in description:

Funus interim

Procedit; sequimur; ad sepulchrum venimus;
In ignem imposita est; fletur; interea hæc foror
Quam dixi, ad flammam accessit imprudentius
Satis cum periculo. Ibi tum exanimatus Pamphilus,
Bene dissimulatum amorem, & celatum indicat;

Occurrit præceps, mulierem ab igne retrahit,
 Mea Glycerium, inquit, quid agis? Cur te is perditum?
 Tum illa, ut consuetum facile amorem cerneret,
 Rejecit se in eum, flens quam familiariter*.

ACT. I. Sc. I.

All the words here are remarkably happy and elegant; and convey a most lively picture of the scene described: while, at the same time, the style appears wholly artless and unlabored. Let us, next, consider some English writers who come under this class.

Simplicity is the great beauty of Archbishop Tillotson's manner. Tillotson has long been admired as an eloquent writer, and a model for preaching. But his eloquence, if we can call it such, has been often misunderstood. For, if we include, in the idea of eloquence, vehemence and strength, picturesque description, glowing

- * “ Meanwhile the funeral proceeds, we follow;
 “ Come to the sepulchre: the body's placed
 “ Upon the pile; lamented; whereupon
 “ This sister, I was speaking of, all wild,
 “ Ran to the flames with peril of her life.
 “ There! there! the frightened Pamphilus betrays
 “ His well dissembled and long hidden love;
 “ Runs up, and takes her round the waist, and cries,
 “ O! my Glycerium! what is it you do?
 “ Why, why, endeavour to destroy yourself?
 “ Then she in such a manner, that you thence
 “ Might easily perceive their long long love,
 “ Threw herself back into his arms, and wept,
 “ Oh! how familiarly!

COLMAN.

figures, or correct arrangement of sentences, in all these parts of oratory the Archbishop is exceedingly deficient. His style is always pure, indeed, and perspicuous, but careless and remiss, too often feeble and languid; little beauty in the construction of his sentences, which are frequently suffered to drag unharmoniously; seldom any attempt towards strength or sublimity. But, notwithstanding these defects, such a constant vein of good sense and piety runs through his works, such an earnest and serious manner, and so much useful instruction conveyed in a style so pure, natural, and unaffected, as will justly recommend him to high regard, as long as the English language remains; not, indeed, as a model of the highest eloquence, but as a simple and amiable writer, whose manner is strongly expressive of great goodness and worth. I observed before, that simplicity of manner may be consistent with some degree of negligence in style; and it is only the beauty of that simplicity which makes the negligence of such writers seem graceful. But, as appears in the Archbishop, negligence may sometimes be carried so far as to impair the beauty of simplicity, and make it border on a flat and languid manner.

Sir William Temple is another remarkable writer in the style of simplicity. In point of ornament and correctness, he rises a degree above Tillotson; though, for correctness, he is not in the highest rank. All is easy and flowing in him; he is exceedingly harmonious; smoothness,

and what may be called amenity, are the distinguishing characters of his manner; relaxing, sometimes, as such a manner will naturally do, into a prolix and remiss style. No writer whatever has stamped upon his style a more lively impression of his own character. In reading his works, we seem engaged in conversation with him; we become thoroughly acquainted with him, not merely as an author, but as a man; and contract a friendship for him. He may be classed as standing in the middle, between a negligent simplicity, and the highest degree of ornament, which this character of style admits.

Of the latter of these, the highest, most correct and ornamented degree of the simple manner, Mr. Addison, is beyond doubt, in the English language, the most perfect example: and, therefore, though not without some faults, he is, on the whole, the safest model for imitation, and the freest from considerable defects, which the language affords. Perspicuous and pure he is in the highest degree; his precision, indeed, not very great; yet nearly as great as the subjects which he treats of require: the construction of his sentences easy, agreeable, and commonly very musical; carrying a character of smoothness, more than of strength. In figurative language, he is rich; particularly, in similes and metaphors; which are so employed, as to render his style splendid without being gaudy. There is not the least affectation in his manner; we see no marks of labor; nothing forced or

constrained; but great elegance joined with great ease and simplicity. He is, in particular, distinguished by a character of modesty, and of politeness, which appears in all his writings. No author has a more popular and insinuating manner; and the great regard which he every where shows for virtue and religion, recommends him highly. If he fails in any thing, it is in want of strength and precision, which renders his manner, though perfectly suited to such essays as he writes in the *Spectator*, not altogether a proper model for any of the higher and more elaborate kinds of composition. Though the public have ever done much justice to his merit, yet the nature of his merit has not always been seen in its true light: for, though his poetry be elegant, he certainly bears a higher rank among the prose writers, than he is entitled to among the poets; and, in prose, his humor is of a much higher, and more original strain, than his philosophy. The character of Sir Roger de Coverley discovers more genius than the critique on Milton.

Such authors as those, whose characters I have been giving, one never tires of reading. There is nothing in their manner that strains or fatigues our thoughts: we are pleased, without being dazzled by their lustre. So powerful is the charm of simplicity in an author of real genius, that it atones for many defects, and reconciles us to many a careless expression. Hence, in all the most excellent authors, both in prose and verse, the simple and natural manner may be always remarked; although other beauties being predominant, this forms not their peculiar and distinguishing

character. Thus Milton is simple in the midst of all his grandeur; and Demosthenes in the midst of all his vehemence. To grave and solemn writings, simplicity of manner adds the more venerable air. Accordingly, this has often been remarked as the prevailing character throughout all the sacred scriptures: and indeed no other character of style was so much suited to the dignity of inspiration.

Of authors, who, notwithstanding many excellencies, have rendered their style much less beautiful by want of simplicity, I cannot give a more remarkable example than Lord Shaftsbury. This is an author on whom I have made observations several times before, and shall now take leave of him, with giving his general character under this head. Considerable merit, doubtless, he has. His works might be read with profit for the moral philosophy which they contain, had he not filled them with so many oblique and invidious insinuations against the Christian Religion; thrown out, too, with so much spleen and satire, as do no honor to his memory, either as an author or a man. His language has many beauties. It is firm, and supported in an uncommon degree: it is rich and musical. No English author, as I formerly showed, has attended so much to the regular construction of his sentences, both with respect to propriety, and with respect to cadence. All this gives so much elegance and pomp to his language, that there is no wonder it should have been sometimes highly admired. It is greatly hurt,

however, by perpetual stiffness and affectation. This is its capital fault. His lordship can express nothing with simplicity. He seems to have considered it as vulgar, and beneath the dignity of a man of quality, to speak like other men. Hence he is ever in buskins; full of circumlocutions and artificial elegance. In every sentence, we see the marks of labor and art; nothing of that ease, which expresses a sentiment coming natural and warm from the heart. Of figures and ornament of every kind, he is exceedingly fond; sometimes happy in them; but his fondness for them is too visible; and having once laid hold of some metaphor or allusion that pleased him, he knows not how to part with it. What is most wonderful, he was a professed admirer of simplicity; is always extolling it in the ancients, and censuring the moderns for the want of it; though he departs from it himself as far as any one modern whatever. Lord Shaftsbury possessed delicacy and refinement of taste, to a degree that we may call excessive and sickly, but he had little warmth of passion; few strong or vigorous feelings: and the coldness of his character led him to that artificial and stately manner which appears in his writings. He was fonder of nothing than of wit and raillery; but he is far from being happy in it. He attempts it often, but always awkwardly; he is stiff, even in his pleasantries; and laughs in form, like an author, and not like a man *.

[* It may perhaps be not unworthy of being mentioned,

From the account which I have given of Lord Shaftsbury's manner, it may easily be imagined, that he would mislead many who blindly admired him. Nothing is more dangerous to the tribe of imitators, than an author, who, with many imposing beauties, has also some very considerable blemishes. This is fully exemplified in Mr. Blackwell of Aberdeen, the author of the *Life of Homer*, the *Letters on Mythology*, and the *Court of Augustus*; a writer of considerable learning, and of ingenuity also; but infected with an extravagant love of an artificial style, and of that parade of language which distinguishes the Shaftsburean manner.

Having now said so much to recommend simplicity, or the easy and natural manner of writing, and having pointed out the defects of an opposite manner; in order to prevent mistakes on this subject, it is necessary for me to observe, that it is very possible for an author to write simply, and yet not beautifully. One may be free from affectation, and not have merit. The beautiful simplicity supposes an author to possess

that the first edition of his *Inquiry into Virtue* was published, surreptitiously, I believe, in a separate form, in the year 1699; and is sometimes to be met with; by comparing which, with the corrected edition of the same treatise, as it now stands among his works, we see one of the most curious and useful examples that I know, of what is called *limæ labor*; the art of polishing language, breaking long sentences, and working up an imperfect draught into a highly finished performance.

real genius; to write with solidity, purity, and liveliness of imagination. In this case, the simplicity or unaffectedness of his manner, is the crowning ornament; it heightens every other beauty; it is the dress of nature, without which, all beauties are imperfect. But if mere unaffectedness were sufficient to constitute the beauty of style, weak, trifling, and dull writers might often lay claim to this beauty. And, accordingly, we frequently meet with pretended critics, who extol the dullest writers on account of what they call the "chaste simplicity of their manner;" which in truth, is no other than the absence of every ornament, through the mere want of genius and imagination. We must distinguish, therefore, between that simplicity which accompanies true genius, and which is perfectly compatible with every proper ornament of style, and that which is no other than a careless and slovenly manner. Indeed, the distinction is easily made from the effect produced. The one never fails to interest the reader; the other is insipid and tiresome.

I proceed to mention one other manner or character of style, different from any that I have yet spoken of; which may be distinguished by the name of the vehement. This always implies strength; and is not, by any means, inconsistent with simplicity: but in its predominant character is distinguishable from either the strong or the simple manner. It has a peculiar ardor; it is a glowing style; the language of a man, whose imagination and passions are heated, and strongly

affected by what he writes ; who is therefore negligent of lesser graces , but pours himself forth with the rapidity and fulness of a torrent. It belongs to the higher kinds of oratory ; and indeed is rather expected from a man who is speaking , than from one who is writing in his closet. The orations of Demosthenes furnish the full and perfect example of this species of style.

Among English writers, the one who has most of this character, though mixed, indeed, with several defects, is Lord Bolingbroke. Bolingbroke was formed by nature to be a factious leader ; the demagogue of a popular assembly. Accordingly, the style that runs through all his political writings, is that of one declaiming with heat, rather than writing with deliberation. He abounds in rhetorical figures ; and pours himself forth with great impetuosity. He is copious to a fault ; places the same thought before us in many different views ; but generally with life and ardor. He is bold, rather than correct ; a torrent that flows strong, but often muddy. His sentences are varied as to length and shortness ; inclining, however, most to long periods, sometimes including parentheses, and frequently crowding and heaping a multitude of things upon one another, as naturally happens in the warmth of speaking. In the choice of his words, there is great felicity and precision. In exact construction of sentences he is much inferior to Lord Shaftsbury ; but greatly superior to him in life and ease. Upon the whole, his merit, as a writer, would have been very considerable, if

his matter had equalled his style. But whilst we find many things to commend in the latter, in the former, as I before remarked, we can hardly find any thing to commend. In his reasonings, for most part, he is flimsy and false; in his political writings factious; in what he calls his philosophical ones, irreligious and sophistical in the highest degree.

I shall insist no longer on the different manners of writers, or the general characters of style. Some other, besides those which I have mentioned, might be pointed out; but I am sensible, that it is very difficult to separate such general considerations of the style of authors from their peculiar turn of sentiment, which it is not my business, at present, to criticize. Conceited writers, for instance, discover their spirit so much in their composition, that it imprints on their style a character of pertness; though I confess it is difficult to say, whether this can be classed among the attributes of style, or rather is to be ascribed entirely to the thought. In whatever class we rank it, all appearances of it ought to be avoided with care, as a most disgusting blemish in writing. Under those general heads, which I have considered, I have taken an opportunity of giving the character of many of the eminent classics in the English language.

From what I have said on this subject, it may be inferred, that to determine among all those different manners of writing, what is precisely the best, is neither easy, nor necessary. Style is a field

that admits of great latitude. Its qualities in different authors may be very different; and yet in them all beautiful. Room must be left here for genius; for that particular determination which every one receives from nature to one manner of expression more than another. Some general qualities, indeed, there are of such importance, as should always, in every kind of composition be kept in view; and some defects we should always study to avoid. An ostentatious, a feeble, a harsh, or an obscure style, for instance, are always faults; and perspicuity strength, neatness, and simplicity, are beauties to be always aimed at. But as to the mixture of all, or the degree of predominancy of any one of these good qualities, for forming our peculiar distinguishing manner, no precise rules can be given; nor will I venture to point out any one model as absolutely perfect.

It will be more to the purpose, that I conclude these dissertations upon style, with a few directions concerning the proper method of attaining a good style in general; leaving the particular character of that style to be either formed by the subject on which we write, or prompted by the bent of genius.

The first direction which I give for this purpose, is, to study clear ideas on the subject concerning which we are to write or speak. This is a direction which may at first appear to have small relation to style. Its relation to it, however, is extremely close. The foundation of

all good style, is good sense accompanied with a lively imagination. The style and thoughts of a writer are so intimately connected, that, as I have several times hinted, it is frequently hard to distinguish them. Wherever the impressions of things upon our minds are faint and indistinct, or perplexed and confused, our style in treating of such things will infallibly be so too. Whereas what we conceive clearly and feel strongly, we will naturally express with clearness and with strength. This, then, we may be assured, is a capital rule as to style, to think closely of the subject, till we have attained a full and distinct view of the matter which we are to clothe in words, till we become warm and interested in it; then and not till then, shall we find expression begin to flow. Generally speaking, the best and most proper expressions, are those which a clear view of the subject suggests, without much labor or inquiry after them. This is Quinctilian's observation, Lib. viii. c. 1. "*Plerumque optima verba rebus cohærent, & cernuntur suo lumine. At nos quærimus illa, tanquam lateant seque subducant. Ita nunquam putamus verba esse circa id de quo dicendum est; sed ex aliis locis petimus & inventis vim afferimus **."

* "*The most proper words for the most part adhere to the thoughts which are to be expressed by them, and may be discovered as by their own light. But we hunt after them, as if they were hidden, and only to be found in a corner. Hence instead of conceiving the words to lie near the subject,*

In the second place, in order to form a good style, the frequent practice of composing is indispensibly necessary. Many rules concerning style I have delivered; but no rules will answer the end without exercise and habit. At the same time, it is not every sort of composing that will improve style. This is so far from being the case, that by frequent, careless, and hasty composition, we shall acquire certainly a very bad style; we shall have more trouble afterwards in unlearning faults, and correcting negligences, than if we had not been accustomed to composition at all. In the beginning therefore, we ought to write slowly, and with much care. Let the facility and speed of writing, be the fruit of longer practice. “*Moram & sollicitudinem,*” says Quintilian, with the greatest reason, L. x. c. 3, “*initiis impero. Nam primum hoc constituendum ac obtinendum est, ut quam optime scribamus: celeritatem dabit consuetudo. Paulatim res facilius se ostendent, verba respondebunt, compositio prosequetur. Cuncta denique ut in familia bene instituta in officio erunt. Summa hæc est rei; cito scribendo non fit ut bene scribatur; bene scribendo, fit ut cito *.*”

“we go in quest of them to some other quarter, and endeavour to give force to the expressions we have found out.”

* “I enjoin that such as are beginning the practice of composition, write slowly, and with anxious deliberation. Their great object at first should be, to write as well as possible, practice will enable them to write speedily. By

We must observe, however, that there may be an extreme, in too great and anxious a care about words. We must not retard the course of thought, nor cool the heat of imagination, by pausing too long on every word we employ. There is, on certain occasions, a glow of composition which should be kept up, if we hope to express ourselves happily, though at the expense of allowing some inadvertencies to pass. A more severe examination of these must be left to be the work of correction. For, if the practice of composition be useful, the laborious work of correcting is no less so; is indeed absolutely necessary to our reaping any benefit from the habit of composition. What we have written, should be laid by for some little time, till the ardor of composition be past, till the fondness for the expressions we have used be worn off, and the expressions themselves be forgotten; and then reviewing our work with a cool and critical eye, as if it were the performance of another, we shall discern many imperfections which at first escaped us. Then is the season for pruning redundancies; for weighing the arrangement of sentences;

“degrees matter will offer itself more readily; words will
“be at hand; composition will flow; every thing, as in the
“arrangement of a well-ordered family, will present itself
“in its proper place. The sum of the whole is this; by
“hasty composition, we shall never acquire the art of
“composing well; by writing well, we shall come to write
“speedily.”

sentences; for attending to the juncture and connecting particles; and bringing style into a regular, correct, and supported form. This "*limæ labor*," must be submitted to by all who would communicate their thoughts with proper advantage to others; and some practice in it will soon sharpen their eye to the most necessary objects of attention, and render it a much more easy and practicable work than might at first be imagined.

In the third place, with respect to the assistance that is to be gained from the writings of others, it is obvious, that we ought to render ourselves well acquainted with the style of the best authors. This is requisite, both in order to form a just taste in style, and to supply us with a full stock of words on every subject. In reading authors, with a view to style, attention should be given to the peculiarities of their different manners; and in this, and former lectures, I have endeavoured to suggest several things that may be useful in this view. I know no exercise that will be found more useful for acquiring a proper style, than to translate some passage from an eminent English author, into our own words. What I mean is, to take, for instance, some page of one of Mr. Addison's Spectators, and read it carefully over two or three times, till we have got a firm hold of the thoughts contained in it; then to lay aside the book, to attempt to write out the passage from memory, in the best way we can; and having done so,

next to open the book, and compare what we have written, with the style of the author. Such an exercise will, by comparison, show us where the defects of our style lie; will lead us to the proper attention for rectifying them; and among the different ways in which the same thought may be expressed, will make us perceive that which is the most beautiful. But,

In the fourth place, I must caution, at the same time, against a servile imitation of any one author whatever. This is always dangerous. It hampers genius; it is likely to produce a stiff manner; and those who are given to close imitation, generally imitate an author's faults as well as his beauties. No man will ever become a good writer, or speaker, who has not some degree of confidence to follow his own genius. We ought to beware, in particular, of adopting any author's noted phrases, or transcribing passages from him. Such a habit will prove fatal to all genuine composition. Infinitely better it is to have something that is our own, though of moderate beauty, than to affect to shine in borrowed ornaments, which will, at last, betray the utter poverty of our genius. On these heads of composing, correcting, reading, and imitating, I advise every student of oratory to consult what Quinctilian has delivered in the Xth book of his Institutions, where he will find a variety of excellent observations and directions, that well deserve attention.

In the fifth place, it is an obvious, but material rule, with respect to style, that we

always study to adapt it to the subject, and also to the capacity of our hearers, if we are to speak in public. Nothing merits the name of eloquent or beautiful, which is not suited to the occasion, and to the persons to whom it is addressed. It is to the last degree awkward and absurd, to attempt a poetical florid style, on occasions, when it should be our business only to argue and reason; or to speak with elaborate pomp of expression, before persons who comprehend nothing of it, and who can only stare at our unseasonable magnificence. These are defects not so much in point of style, as, what is much worse, in point of common sense. When we begin to write or speak, we ought previously to fix in our minds a clear conception of the end to be aimed at; to keep this steadily in our view, and to suit our style to it. If we do not sacrifice to this great object, every ill-timed ornament that may occur to our fancy, we are unpardonable; and though children and fools may admire, men of sense will laugh at us and our style.

In the last place, I cannot conclude the subject without this admonition, that, in any case, and on any occasion, attention to style must not engross us so much, as to detract from a higher degree of attention to the thoughts: “*cūram* “*verborum*,” says the great Roman critic, “*rerum volo esse sollicitudinem.*” *” A direction the more necessary, that the present taste of the

* “To your expression be attentive; but about your matter be solicitous.”

age in writing, seems to lean more to style than to thought. It is much easier to dress up trivial and common sentiments with some beauty of expression, than to afford a fund of vigorous, ingenious, and useful thoughts. The latter, requires true genius; the former, may be attained by industry, with the help of very superficial parts. Hence, we find so many writers frivolously rich in style, but wretchedly poor in sentiment. The public ear is now so much accustomed to a correct and ornamented style, that no writer can, with safety, neglect the study of it. But he is a contemptible one who does not look to something beyond it; who does not lay the chief stress upon his matter, and employ such ornaments of style to recommend it, as are manly, not foppish: “*Majore animo,*” says the writer whom I have so often quoted, “*aggredienda*” “*est eloquentia; quæ si toto corpore valet, ungues*” “*polire & capillum componere, non existimabit*” “*ad curam suam pertinere.* Ornatus & virilis &” “*fortis, & sanctus sit; nec effeminatam levitatem,*” “*& fucol ementitum colorem amet; sanguine &*” “*viribus niteat* *.

* “A higher spirit ought to animate those who study eloquence. They ought to consult the health and soundness of the whole body, rather than bend their attention to such trifling objects as paring the nails, and dressing the hair. Let ornament be manly and chaste, without effeminate gaiety, or artificial coloring; let it shine with the glow of health and strength.”

LECTURE XX.

*Critical Examination of the Style of Mr. Addison,
in N^o 411. of the Spectator.*

I have insisted fully on the subject of language and style, both because it is, in itself, of great importance, and because it is more capable of being ascertained by precise rule, than several other parts of composition. A critical analysis of the style of some good author will tend further to illustrate the subject; as it will suggest observations which I have not had occasion to make, and will show, in the most practical light, the use of those which I have made.

Mr. Addison is the author whom I have chosen for this purpose. The Spectator, of which his papers are the chief ornament, is a book which is in the hands of every one, and which cannot be praised too highly. The good sense, and good writing, the useful morality, and the admirable vein of humor which abound in it, render it one of those standard books which have done the greatest honor to the English nation. I have formerly given the general character of

Mr. Addison's style and manner, as natural and unaffected, easy and polite, and full of those graces which a flowery imagination diffuses over writing. At the same time, though one of the most beautiful writers in the language, he is not the most correct; a circumstance which renders his composition the more proper to be the subject of our present criticism. The free and flowing manner of this amiable writer sometimes led him into inaccuracies, which the more studied circumspection and care of far inferior writers have taught them to avoid. Remarking his beauties, therefore, which I shall have frequent occasion to do as I proceed, I must also point out his negligences and defects. Without a free, impartial discussion of both the faults and beauties which occur in his composition, it is evident, this piece of criticism would be of no service: and, from the freedom which I use in criticizing Mr. Addison's style, none can imagine, that I mean to depreciate his writings, after having repeatedly declared the high opinion which I entertain of them. The beauties of this author are so many, and the general character of his style is so elegant and estimable, that the minute imperfections I shall have occasion to point out, are but like those spots in the sun, which may be discovered by the assistance of art, but which have no effect in obscuring its lustre. It is, indeed, my judgment, that what Quintilian applies to Cicero, "*Ille se profecisse sciat, cui Cicero valde placebit,*" may, with justice, be applied to Mr.

Addison ; that to be highly pleased with his manner of writing, is the criterion of one's having acquired a good taste in English style. The paper on which we are now to enter, is N° 411. the first of his celebrated essays on the pleasures of the imagination, in the sixth volume of the Spectator. It begins thus:

“ Our sight is the most perfect, and most
“ delightful of all our senses.”

This is an excellent introductory sentence. It is clear, precise, and simple. The author lays down, in a few plain words, the proposition which he is going to illustrate throughout the rest of the paragraph. In this manner we should always set out. A first sentence should seldom be a long, and never an intricate one.

He might have said, “ our sight is the most
“ perfect, and the most delightful.” — But he has judged better, in omitting to repeat the article, *the*. For the repetition of it is proper, chiefly when we intend to point out the objects of which we speak, as distinguished from, or contrasted with, each other; and when we want that the reader's attention should rest on that distinction. For instance; had Mr. Addison intended to say, that our sight is at once the most *delightful*, and the most *useful*, of all our senses, the article might then have been repeated with propriety, as a clear and strong distinction would have been conveyed. But as between *perfect* and *delightful*, there is less contrast, there was no occasion for such repetition. It would

have had no other effect, but to add a word unnecessarily to the sentence. He proceeds:

“ It fills the mind with the largest variety of
“ ideas, converses with its objects at the greatest
“ distance, and continues the longest in action,
“ without being tired or fatiated with its proper
“ enjoyments.”

This sentence deserves attention, as remarkably harmonious, and well constructed. It possesses, indeed, almost all the properties of a perfect sentence. It is entirely perspicuous. It is loaded with no superfluous or unnecessary words. For, *tired or fatiated*, towards the end of the sentence, are not used for synonymous terms. They convey distinct ideas, and refer to different members of the period; that this sense “continues the longest
“ in action without being tired,” that is, without being fatigued with its action; and also, without
“ being fatiated with its proper enjoyments.” That quality of a good sentence which I termed its unity, is here perfectly preserved. It is *our sight* of which he speaks. This is the object carried through the sentence, and presented to us, in every member of it, by those verbs, *fills, converses, continues*, to each of which, it is clearly the nominative. Those capital words are disposed of in the most proper places; and that uniformity is maintained in the construction of the sentence, which suits the unity of the object.

Observe too, the music of the period; consisting of three members, each of which, agreeably to a rule I formerly mentioned, grows, and rises

above the other in sound, till the sentence is conducted, at last, to one of the most melodious closes which our language admits; “without being tired or satiated with its proper enjoyments.” *Enjoyments*, is a word of length and dignity, exceedingly proper for a close which is designed to be a musical one. The harmony is the more happy, that this disposition of the members of the period which suits the sound so well, is no less just and proper with respect to the sense. It follows the order of nature. First, we have the variety of objects mentioned, which sight furnishes to the mind; next, we have the action of sight on those objects; and lastly, we have time and continuance of its action. No order could be more natural or happy.

This sentence has still another beauty. It is figurative, without being too much so for the subject. A metaphor runs through it. The sense of sight is, in some degree, personified. We are told of its *conversing* with its objects; and of its not being *tired* or *satiated* with its *enjoyments*; all which expressions are plain allusions to the actions and feelings of men. This is that slight sort of personification, which, without any appearance of boldness, and without elevating the fancy much above its ordinary state, renders discourse picturesque, and leads us to conceive the author's meaning more distinctly, by clothing abstract ideas, in some degree, with sensible colors. Mr. Addison abounds with this beauty of style beyond most authors; and the sentence which we have

been considering, is very expressive of his manner of writing. There is no blemish in it whatever, unless that a strict critic might perhaps object, that the epithet *large*, which he applies to *variety*, — “the largest variety of ideas”, — is an epithet more commonly applied to extent than to number. It is plain, that he here employed it to avoid the repetition of the word *great*, which occurs immediately afterwards.

“The sense of feeling can, indeed, give us a
“notion of extension, shape, and all other ideas
“that enter at the eye, except colors; but, at
“the same time, it is very much straitened and
“confined in its operations, to the number,
“bulk, and distance of its particular objects.”

This sentence is by no means so happy as the former. It is, indeed, neither clear nor elegant. *Extension and shape* can, with no propriety, be called *ideas*; they are properties of matter. Neither is it accurate, even according to Mr. Locke's philosophy (with which our author seems here to have puzzled himself), to speak of any sense giving us a notion of ideas; our senses give us the ideas themselves. The meaning would have been much more clear, if the author had expressed himself thus: “The sense of feeling can, indeed, give
“us the idea of extension, figure, and all the
“other properties of matter which are perceived
“by the eye, except colors.”

The latter part of the sentence is still more embarrassed. For what meaning can we make of the sense of feeling, being “confined, in its

“operations, to the number, bulk, and distance,
“of its particular objects?” Surely, every sense is confined, as much as the sense of feeling, to the number, bulk, and distance of its own objects. Sight and feeling are, in this respect perfectly on a level; neither of them can extend beyond their own objects. The turn of expression is so inaccurate here, that one would be apt to suspect two words to have been omitted in the printing, which were originally in Mr. Addison’s manuscript; because the insertion would render the sense much more intelligible and clear. These two words are, “*with regard*: — It is very
“much straitened, and confined, in its operations,
“with regard to the number, bulk, and distance
“of its particular objects.” The meaning then would be, that feeling is more limited than sight *in this respect*; that it is confined to a narrower circle, to a smaller number of objects.

The epithet *particular*, applied to *objects*, in the conclusion of the sentence, is redundant, and conveys no meaning whatever. Mr. Addison seems to have used it in place of *peculiar*, as indeed he does often in other passages of his writings. But *particular* and *peculiar*, though they are too often confounded, are words of different import from each other. *Particular* stands opposed to *general*; *peculiar* stands opposed, to what is possessed in *common with others*. *Particular* expresses what in the logical style is called *species*; *peculiar*, what is called *differentia*. — *Its peculiar objects* would have signified in this place, the objects

of the sense of feeling, as distinguished from the objects of any other sense; and would have had more meaning than *its particular objects*. Though, in truth, neither the one nor the other epithet was requisite. It was sufficient to have said simply, *its objects*.

“ Our sight seems designed to supply all these
“ defects, and may be considered as a more
“ delicate and diffusive kind of touch, that
“ spreads itself over an infinite multitude of
“ bodies, comprehends the largest figures, and
“ brings into our reach some of the most remote
“ parts of the universe.”

Here again the author's style returns upon us in all its beauty. This is a sentence distinct, graceful, well arranged, and highly musical. In the latter part of it, it is constructed with three members, which are formed much in the same manner with those of the second sentence, on which I bestowed so much praise. The construction is so similar, that if it had followed immediately after it, we should have been sensible of a faulty monotony. But the interposition of another sentence between them, prevents this effect.

“ It is this sense which furnishes the imagination
“ with its ideas; so that by the pleasures of the
“ imagination or fancy (which I shall use pro-
“ miscuously), I here mean such as arise from
“ visible objects, either when we have them
“ actually in our view; or when we call up their

“ ideas into our minds by paintings, statues, descriptions, or any the like occasion.”

In place of, *it is this sense which furnishes*—the author might have said more shortly, *this sense furnishes*. But the mode of expression which he has used, is here more proper. This sort of full and ample assertion, *it is this which*, is fit to be used when a proposition of importance is laid down, to which we seek to call the reader's attention. It is like pointing with the hand at the object of which we speak. The parenthesis in the middle of the sentence, *which I shall use promiscuously*, is not clear. He ought to have said, *terms which I shall use promiscuously*; as the verb *use* relates not to the pleasures of the imagination, but to the terms of fancy and imagination, which he was to employ as synonymous. *Any the like occasion* — to call a painting or a statue *an occasion* is not a happy expression, nor is it very proper to speak of *calling up ideas by occasions*. The common phrase, *any such means*, would have been more natural.

“ We cannot indeed have a single image in
“ the fancy, that did not make its first entrance
“ through the sight; but we have the power
“ of retaining, altering, and compounding those
“ images which we have once received, into all
“ the varieties of picture and vision that are most
“ agreeable to the imagination; for by this faculty,
“ a man in a dungeon is capable of entertaining himself with scenes and landscapes more

“ beautiful than any that can be found in the
“ whole compass of nature.

It may be of use to remark that in one member of this sentence there is an inaccuracy in syntax. It is very proper to say, *altering and compounding those images which we have once received, into all varieties of picture and vision.* But we can with no propriety say, *retaining them into all the varieties*; and yet, according to the manner in which the words are ranged, this construction is unavoidable. For *retaining, altering, and compounding*, are participles, each of which equally refers to, and governs the subsequent noun, *those images*; and that noun again is necessarily connected with the following preposition *into*. This instance shows the importance of carefully attending to the rules of grammar and syntax; when so pure a writer as Mr. Addison could, through inadvertence, be guilty of such an error. The construction might easily have been rectified, by disjoining the participle *retaining* from the other two participles in this way: “ We have the power
“ of retaining these images which we have once
“ received; and of altering and compounding
“ them into all the varieties of picture and vision;” or better perhaps thus: “ We have the power
“ of retaining, altering, and compounding those
“ images which we have once received; and of
“ forming them into all the varieties of picture
“ and vision.” — The latter part of the sentence is clear and elegant.

“ There are few words in the English language,
 “ which are employed in a more loose and un-
 “ circumscribed sense than those of the fancy and
 “ the imagination.”

There are few words — which are employed. —
 It had been better, if our author here had said
 more simply — *Few words in the English language*
are employed. Mr. Addison, whose style is of
 the free and full, rather than the nervous kind,
 deals, on all occasions, in this extended sort of
 phraseology. But it is proper only when some
 assertion of consequence is advanced, and which
 can bear an emphasis; such as that in the first
 sentence of the former paragraph. On other oc-
 casions, these little words *it is*, and *there are*,
 ought to be avoided as redundant and enfee-
 bling—*those of the fancy and the imagination.* The
 article ought to have been omitted here. As he
 does not mean the powers of *the fancy and the*
imagination, but the words only, the article cer-
 tainly had no proper place; neither, indeed, was
 there any occasion for other two words, *those of*.
 Better, if the sentence had run thus: “ Few
 “ words in the English language are employed in
 “ a more loose and uncircumscribed sense, than
 “ fancy and imagination.”

“ I therefore thought it necessary to fix and
 “ determine the notion of these two words, as I
 “ intend to make use of them in the thread of
 “ my following speculations, that the reader may
 “ conceive rightly what is the subject which I pro-
 “ ceed upon.

Though *fix* and *determine* may appear synonymous words, yet a difference between them may be remarked, and they may be viewed, as applied here, with peculiar delicacy. The author had just said, that the words of which he is speaking were *loose* and *uncircumscribed*. *Fix* relates to the first of these, *determine* to the last. We *fix* what is *loose*; that is, we confine the word to its proper place, that it may not fluctuate in our imagination, and pass from one idea to another; and we *determine* what is *uncircumscribed*, that is, we ascertain its *termini* or limits, we draw the circle round it, that we may see its boundaries. For we cannot conceive the meaning of a word, nor indeed of any other thing clearly, till we see its limits, and know how far it extends. These two words, therefore, have grace and beauty as they are here applied; though a writer, more frugal of words than Mr. Addison, would have preferred the single word *ascertain*, which conveys, without any metaphor, the import of them both.

The *notion of these words* is somewhat of a harsh phrase, at least not so commonly used, as the *meaning of these words*—as *I intend to make use of them in the thread of my speculations*; this is plainly faulty. A sort of metaphor is improperly mixed with words in the literal sense. He might very well have said, *as I intend to make use of them in my following speculations*.—This was plain language; but if he chose to borrow an allusion from *thread*, that allusion ought to have been supported;

supported; for there is no consistency in *making use of them in the thread of speculations*; and, indeed, in expressing any thing so simple and familiar as this is, plain language is always to be preferred to metaphorical — *the subject which I proceed upon*, is an ungraceful close of a sentence; better, *the subject upon which I proceed*.

“ I must therefore desire him to remember,
 “ that by the pleasures of the imagination, I
 “ mean only such pleasures as arise originally
 “ from sight, and that I divide these pleasures
 “ into two kinds.”

As the last sentence began with — *I therefore thought it necessary to fix*, it is careless to begin this sentence in a manner so very similar, *I must therefore desire him to remember*; especially, as the small variation of using, *on this account*, or, *for this reason*, in place of *therefore*, would have amended the style. — When he says — *I mean only such pleasures* — it may be remarked, that the adverb *only* is not in its proper place. It is not intended here to qualify the verb *mean*, but *such pleasures*; and therefore should have been placed in as close connexion as possible with the word which it limits or qualifies. The style becomes more clear and neat, when the words are arranged thus: “ by the pleasures of
 “ the imagination, I mean such pleasures only
 “ as arise from sight.”

“ My design being, first of all, to discourse
 “ of those primary pleasures of the imagination,
 “ which entirely proceed from such objects as

“ are before our eyes; and, in the next place,
“ to speak of those secondary pleasures of the
“ imagination, which flow from the ideas of
“ visible objects, when the objects are not actually
“ before the eye, but are called up into our
“ memories, or formed into agreeable visions of
“ things, that are either absent or fictitious.”

It is a great rule in laying down the division of a subject, to study neatness and brevity as much as possible. The divisions are then more distinctly apprehended, and more easily remembered. This sentence is not perfectly happy in that respect. It is somewhat clogged by a tedious phraseology. “ My design being first of all to
“ discourse — in the next place to speak of —
“ such objects as are before our eyes — things
“ that are either absent or fictitious.” Several words might have been spared here; and the style made more neat and compact.

“ The pleasures of the imagination, taken in
“ their full extent, are not so gross as those of
“ sense, nor so refined as those of the under-
“ standing.”

This sentence is distinct and elegant.

“ The last are indeed more preferable, because
“ they are founded on some new knowledge or
“ improvement in the mind of man: Yet it must
“ be confessed, that those of the imagination are
“ as great and as transporting as the other.”

In the beginning of this sentence, the phrase, *more preferable*, is such a plain inaccuracy, that one wonders how Mr. Addison should have fallen

into it; seeing *preferable* of itself, expresses the comparative degree, and is the same with more eligible, or more excellent.

I must observe farther, that the proposition contained in the last member of this sentence, is neither clear nor neatly expressed — *it must be confessed, that those of the imagination are as great, and as transporting as the other.* — In the former sentence, he had compared three things together; the pleasures of the imagination, those of sense, and those of the understanding. In the beginning of this sentence, he had called the pleasures of the understanding *the last*: and he ends the sentence, with observing, that those of the imagination are as great and transporting *as the other*. Now, besides that *the other* makes not a proper contrast with *the last*, he leaves it ambiguous, whether, by *the other*, he meant the pleasures of the understanding, or the pleasures of sense; for it may refer to either by the construction; though, undoubtedly, he intended that it should refer to the pleasures of the understanding only. The proposition, reduced to perspicuous language, runs thus: “ Yet it must be confessed, that the pleasures of the imagination, when compared with those of the understanding, are no less great and transporting.”

“ A beautiful prospect delights the soul as much as a demonstration; and a description in Homer has charmed more readers than a chapter in Aristotle.”

This is a good illustration of what he had been asserting, and is expressed with that happy and elegant turn, for which our author is very remarkable.

“ Besides, the pleasures of the imagination
“ have this advantage above those of the under-
“ standing, that they are more obvious, and
“ more easy to be acquired.

This is also an unexceptionable sentence.

“ It is but opening the eye, and the scene
“ enters.”

This sentence is lively and picturesque. By the gaiety and briskness which it gives the style, it shows the advantage of intermixing such a short sentence as this amidst a run of longer ones, which never fails to have a happy effect. I must remark, however, a small inaccuracy. A *scene* cannot be said to *enter*; an *actor* enters; but a *scene appears*, or *presents itself*.

“ The colors paint themselves on the fancy,
“ with very little attention of thought or appli-
“ cation of mind in the beholder.”

This is still beautiful illustration; carried on with that agreeable floweriness of fancy and style, which is so well suited to those pleasures of the imagination, of which the author is treating.

“ We are struck, we know not how, with
“ the symmetry of any thing we see, and im-
“ mediately assent to the beauty of an object,
“ without inquiring into the particular causes
“ and occasions of it.

There is a falling off here from the elegance of the former sentences. We *assent* to the truth of a proposition ; but cannot so well be said to *assent to the beauty of an object*. *Acknowledge* would have expressed the sense with more propriety. The close of the sentence too is heavy and ungraceful—*the particular causes and occasions of it*, — both *particular*, and *occasions*, are words quite superfluous ; and the pronoun *it* is in some measure ambiguous , whether it refers to beauty or to object. It would have been some amendment to the style to have run thus : “ we immediately acknowledge the beauty of an object, “ without inquiring into the cause of that “ beauty.”

“ A man of a polite imagination is let into a “ great many pleasures, that the vulgar are not “ capable of receiving.”

Polite is a term more commonly applied to manner or behaviour, than to the mind or imagination. There is nothing farther to be observed on this sentence, unless the use of *that* for a relative pronoun, instead of *which*; an usage which is too frequent with Mr. Addison. *Which* is a much more definite word than *that*, being never employed in any other way than as a relative; whereas *that* is a word of many senses; sometimes a demonstrative pronoun, often a conjunction. In some cases we are indeed obliged to use *that* for a relative, in order to avoid the ungraceful repetition of *which* in the same sentence. But when we are laid under no necessity

of this kind, *which* is always the preferable word, and certainly was so in this sentence — *pleasures which the vulgar are not capable of receiving*, is much better than *pleasures that the vulgar, &c.*

“ He can converse with a picture, and find
“ an agreeable companion in a statue. He meets
“ with a secret refreshment in a description; and
“ often feels a greater satisfaction in the prospect
“ of fields and meadows, than another does in
“ the possession. It gives him, indeed, a kind
“ of property in every thing he sees; and makes
“ the most rude uncultivated parts of nature ad-
“ minister to his pleasures: so that he looks upon
“ the world, as it were, in another light, and
“ discovers in it a multitude of charms that con-
“ ceal themselves from the generality of mankind.”

All this is very beautiful. The illustration is happy; and the style runs with the greatest ease and harmony. We see no labor, no stiffness, or affectation; but an author writing from the native flow of a gay and pleasing imagination. This predominant character of Mr. Addison's manner, far more than compensates all those little negligences which we are now remarking. Two of these occur in this paragraph. The first, in the sentence which begins with, *it gives him indeed a kind of property* — to this *it*, there is no proper antecedent in the whole paragraph. In order to gather the meaning, we must look back as far as to the third sentence before, the first of the paragraph, which begins with, *a man of a polite*

imagination. This phrase, *polite imagination*, is the only antecedent to which this *it* can refer; and even that is an improper antecedent, as it stands in the genitive case, as the qualification only of *a man*.

The other instance of negligence, is towards the end of the paragraph — *so that he looks upon the world, as it were, in another light.* — By another light, Mr. Addison means, a light different from that in which other men view the world. But though this expression clearly conveyed this meaning to himself when writing, it conveys it very indistinctly to others; and is an instance of that sort of inaccuracy, into which, in the warmth of composition, every writer of a lively imagination is apt to fall; and which can only be remedied by a cool, subsequent review. — *As it were* — is upon most occasions no more than an ungraceful palliative, and here there was not the least occasion for it, as he was not about to say any thing which required a softening of this kind. To say the truth, this last sentence, *so that he looks upon the world*, and what follows, had better been wanting altogether. It is no more than an unnecessary recapitulation of what had gone before; a feeble adjection to the lively picture he had given of the pleasures of the imagination. The paragraph would have ended with more spirit at the words immediately preceding; *the uncultivated parts of nature administer to his pleasures.*

“ There are indeed, but very few who know
“ how to be idle and innocent, or have a relish of
“ any pleasures that are not criminal; every di-
“ version they take, is at the expense of some
“ one virtue or another, and their very first step
“ out of business is into vice or folly.

Nothing can be more elegant, or more finely turned, than this sentence. It is neat, clear, and musical. We could hardly alter one word, or disarrange one member, without spoiling it. Few sentences are to be found more finished, or more happy.

“ A man should endeavour, therefore, to make
“ the sphere of his innocent pleasures as wide as
“ possible, that he may retire into them with
“ safety, and find in them, such a satisfaction as
“ a wise man would not blush to take.

This also is a good sentence, and gives occasion to no material remark.

“ Of this nature are those of the imagination,
“ which do not require such a bent of thought as
“ is necessary to our more serious employments,
“ nor, at the same time, suffer the mind to sink
“ into that indolence and remissness, which are
“ apt to accompany our more sensual delights;
“ but like a gentle exercise to the faculties,
“ awaken them from sloth and idleness without
“ putting them upon any labor or difficulty.

The beginning of this sentence is not correct, and affords an instance of a period too loosely connected with the preceding one. *Of this nature, says he, are those of the imagination.* We might

ask of what nature; For it had not been the scope of the preceding sentence to describe the nature of any set of pleasures. He had said, that it was every man's duty to make the sphere of his innocent pleasures as wide as possible, in order that within that sphere, he might find a safe retreat, and a laudable satisfaction. The transition is loosely made, by beginning the next sentence with saying, *of this nature are those of the imagination*. It had been better, if, keeping in view the governing object of the preceding sentence, he had said, "this advantage we gain," or, "this satisfaction we enjoy, by means of the pleasures of imagination. The rest of the sentence is abundantly correct.

"We might here add, that the pleasures of the fancy are more conducive to health than those of the understanding, which are worked out by dint of thinking, and attended with too violent a labor of the brain.

On this sentence, nothing occurs deserving of remark, except that *worked out by dint of thinking*, is a phrase which borders too much on vulgar and colloquial language, to be proper for being employed in a polished composition.

"Delightful scenes, whether in nature, painting, or poetry, have a kindly influence on the body, as well as the mind, and not only serve to clear and brighten the imagination, but are able to disperse grief and melancholy, and to set the animal spirits in pleasing and agreeable motions. For this reason Sir Francis Bacon,

“ in his Essay upon Health, has not thought it
“ improper to prescribe to his reader a poem,
“ or a prospect, where he particularly dissuades
“ him from knotty and subtle disquisitions and
“ advises him to pursue studies that fill the mind
“ with splendid and illustrious objects, as histo-
“ ries, fables, and contemplations of nature.

In the latter of these two sentences, a member of the period is altogether out of its place; which gives the whole sentence a harsh and disjointed cast, and serves to illustrate the rules I formerly gave concerning arrangement. The wrong-placed member which I point at, is this; *where he particularly dissuades him from knotty and subtle disquisitions*; — these words should, undoubtedly, have been placed not where they stand, but thus: *Sir Francis Bacon, in his Essay upon Health, where he particularly dissuades the reader from knotty and subtle speculations, has not thought it improper to prescribe to him, &c.* This arrangement reduces every thing into its proper order.

“ I have, in this paper, by way of introduction,
“ settled the notion of those pleasures of the
“ imagination, which are the subject of my
“ present undertaking, and endeavoured, by
“ several considerations, to recommend to my
“ readers the pursuit of those pleasures; I shall, in
“ my next paper examine the several sources from
“ whence these pleasures are derived.

These two concluding sentences afford examples of the proper collocation of circumstances

in a period. I formerly showed, that it is often a matter of difficulty to dispose of them in such a manner, as that they shall not embarrass the principal subject of the sentence. In the sentences before us, several of these incidental circumstances necessarily come in — *by way of introduction* — *by several considerations* — *in this paper* — *in the next paper*. All which are, with great propriety, managed by our author. It will be found, upon trial, that there were no other parts of the sentence, in which they could have been placed to equal advantage. Had he said, for instance, “ I have settled the notion, (rather, *the meaning*) — “ of those pleasures of the imagination, which are “ the subject of my present undertaking, by way “ of introduction, in this paper, and endeavoured “ to recommend the pursuit of those pleasures to “ my readers by several considerations,” we must be sensible, that the sentence, thus clogged with circumstances in the wrong place, would neither have been so neat nor so clear, as it is by the present construction.

LECTURE XXI.

*Critical Examination of the Style in N^o 412. of
the Spectator.*

THE observations which have occurred in reviewing that paper of Mr. Addison's, which was the subject of the last lecture, sufficiently show, that in the writings of an author of the most happy genius, and distinguished talents, inaccuracies may sometimes be found. Though such inaccuracies may be overbalanced by so many beauties, as render style highly pleasing and agreeable upon the whole, yet it must be desirable to every writer to avoid, as far as he can, inaccuracy of any kind. As the subject therefore is of importance, I have thought it might be useful to carry on this criticism throughout two or three subsequent papers of the Spectator. At the same time I must intimate, that the lectures on these papers are solely intended for such as are applying themselves to the study of English style. I pretend not to give instruction to those who are

already well acquainted with the powers of language. To them my remarks may prove unedifying; to some they may seem tedious and minute: but to such as have not yet made all the proficiency which they desire in elegance of style; strict attention to the composition and structure of sentences cannot fail to prove of considerable benefit: and though my remarks on Mr. Addison should, in any instance, be thought ill-founded, they will, at least, serve the purpose of leading them into the train of making proper remarks for themselves *. I proceed, therefore, to the examination of the subsequent paper N^o 412.

“ I shall first consider those pleasures of the
“ imagination, which arise from the actual view
“ and survey of outward objects: and these, I

* If there be readers who think any farther apology requisite for my adventuring to criticize the sentences of so eminent an author as Mr. Addison, I must take notice, that I was naturally led to it by the circumstances of that part of the kingdom where these lectures were read; where the ordinary spoken language often differs much from what is used by good English authors. Hence it occurred to me, as a proper method of correcting any peculiarities of dialect, to direct students of eloquence, to analyze and examine, with particular attention, the structure of Mr. Addison's sentences. Those papers of the Spectator, which are the subject of the following lectures, were accordingly given out in exercise to students, to be thus examined and analyzed; and several of the observations which follow, both on the beauties and blemishes of this author, were suggested, by the observations given to me in consequence of the exercise prescribed.

“think, all proceed from the sight of what is
“great, uncommon, or beautiful.”

This sentence gives occasion for no material remark. It is simple and distinct. The two words which he here uses, *view* and *survey*, are not altogether synonymous, as the former may be supposed to import mere inspection; the latter more deliberate examination. Yet they lie so near to one another in meaning, that, in the present case, any one of them, perhaps, would have been sufficient. The epithet *actual*, is introduced, in order to mark more strongly the distinction between what our author calls the primary pleasures of imagination, which arise from immediate view, and the secondary, which arise from remembrance or description.

“There may, indeed, be something so ter-
“rible or offensive, that the horror, or loath-
“someness of an object, may overbear the plea-
“sure which results from its novelty, greatness,
“or beauty; but still there will be such a mix-
“ture of delight in the very disgust it gives us,
“as any of these three qualifications are most
“conspicuous and prevailing.”

This sentence must be acknowledged to be an unfortunate one. The sense is obscure and embarrassed, and the expression loose and irregular. The beginning of it is perplexed by the wrong position of the words *something* and *object*. The natural arrangement would have been, “there may, indeed, be something in an
“object so terrible or offensive, that the horror

“or loathsomeness of it may overbear.” — These two epithets, *horror* or *loathsomeness*, are awkwardly joined together. *Loathsomeness* is, indeed, a quality which may be ascribed to an object; but *horror* is not; it is a feeling excited in the mind. The language would have been much more correct, had our author said, “there may, indeed, be something in an object so terrible or offensive, that the horror or disgust which it excites may overbear.” — The first two epithets, *terrible* or *offensive*, would then have expressed the qualities of an object; — the latter, *horror* or *disgust*, the corresponding sentiments which these qualities produce in us. *Loathsomeness* was the most unhappy word he could have chosen: for to be *loathsome*, is to be odious, and seems totally to exclude any *mixture of delight*, which he afterwards supposes may be found in the object.

In the latter part of the sentence there are several inaccuracies. When he says; “there will be such a mixture of delight in the very disgust it gives us, as any of these three qualifications are most conspicuous.” The construction is defective, and seems hardly grammatical. He meant assuredly to say, “such a mixture of delight as is proportioned to the degree in which any of these three qualifications are most conspicuous.” — We know, that there may be a mixture of pleasant and of disagreeable feelings excited by the same object, yet it appears inaccurate to say, that there is any “delight in

“the very disgust.” — The plural verb *are*, is improperly joined to “any of these three qualifications;” for as *any* is here used distributively, and means “any one of these three qualifications.” the corresponding verb ought to have been singular. The order in which the two last words are placed, should have been reversed, and made to stand, “prevailing and conspicuous.” They are *conspicuous*, because they *prevail*.

“By greatness, I do not only mean the bulk
“of any single object, but the largeness of a
“whole view, considered as one entire piece.”

In a former lecture, when treating of the structure of sentences, I quoted this sentence as an instance of the careless manner in which adverbs are sometimes interjected in the midst of a period. *Only*, as it is here placed, appears to be a limitation of the following verb, *mean*. The question might be put, what more does he than only mean? as the author, undoubtedly, intended it to refer to the “bulk of a single object,” it would have been placed, with more propriety, after these words: — “I do not mean the bulk
“of any single object only, but the largeness of
“a whole view.” — As the following phrase, considered as one entire piece, seems to be somewhat deficient, both in dignity and propriety, perhaps this adjection might have been altogether omitted, and the sentence have closed with fully as much advantage at the word *view*.

“Such are the prospects of an open champaign
“country, a vast uncultivated desert, of huge
“heaps

“ heaps of mountains, high rocks and precipi-
 “ ces, or a wide expanse of waters, where we
 “ are not struck with the novelty, or beauty of
 “ the sight, but with that rude kind of magni-
 “ ficence which appears in many of these stupen-
 “ dous works of nature.”

This sentence, in the main, is beautiful. The objects presented are all of them noble, selected with judgment, arranged with propriety, and accompanied with proper epithets. We must, however, observe, that the sentence is too loosely, and not very grammatically, connected with the preceding one. He says, — “ such are the
 “ prospects;” — *such*, signifies, of that nature or quality; which necessarily presupposes some adjective, or word descriptive of a quality going before, to which it refers. But, in the foregoing sentence, there is no such adjective. He had spoken of *greatness* in the abstract only; and, therefore, *such* has no distinct antecedent to which we can refer it. The sentence would have been introduced with more grammatical propriety, by saying, “ To this class belong,” or, “ under this
 “ head are ranged the prospects, &c.” — The *of*, which is prefixed to “ huge heaps of mountains,” is misplaced, and has, perhaps, been an error in the printing; as, either all the particulars here enumerated should have had this mark of the genitive, or it should have been prefixed to none but the first. — When, in the close of the sentence, the author speaks of that
 “ rude magnificence, which appears in many of

“ these stupendous works of nature,” he had better have omitted the word *many*, which seems to except some of them. Whereas, in his general proposition, he undoubtedly meant to include all the stupendous works he had enumerated; and there is no question that, in all of them, a rude magnificence appears.

“ Our imagination loves to be filled with an
“ object, or to grasp at any thing that is too big
“ for its capacity. We are flung into a pleasing
“ astonishment at such unbounded views; and
“ feel a delightful stillness and amazement in the
“ soul, at the apprehension of them.”

The language here is elegant, and several of the expressions remarkably happy. There is nothing which requires any animadversion except the close, “ at the apprehension of them.” Not only is this a languid enfeebling conclusion of a sentence, otherwise beautiful, but “ the apprehension of views,” is a phrase destitute of all propriety, and, indeed, scarcely intelligible. Had this adjection been entirely omitted, and the sentence been allowed to close with “ stillness and amazement in the soul,” it would have been a great improvement. Nothing is frequently more hurtful to the grace or vivacity of a period, than superfluous dragging words at the conclusion.

“ The mind of man naturally hates every thing
“ that looks like a restraint upon it, and is apt
“ to fancy itself under a sort of confinement,
“ when the sight is pent up in a narrow compass,

“ and shortened on every side by the neighbour-
“ hood of walls or mountains. On the contrary,
“ a spacious horizon is an image of liberty, where
“ the eye has room to range abroad, to expatiate
“ at large on the immensity of its views, and to
“ lose itself amidst the variety of objects that
“ offer themselves to its observation. Such wide
“ and undetermined prospects are as pleasing to
“ the fancy, as the speculations of eternity, or
“ infinitude, are to the understanding.”

Our author's style appears, here in all that native beauty which cannot be too much praised. The numbers flow smoothly, and with a graceful harmony. The words which he has chosen, carry a certain amplitude and fulness, well suited to the nature of the subject; and the members of the periods rise in a gradation, accommodated to the rise of the thought. The eye first *ranges abroad*; then “expatiates at large on the immensity of its views;” and, at last, “loses itself amidst the variety of objects that offer themselves to its observation.” The *fancy* is elegantly contrasted with the *understanding*, *prospects* with *speculations*, and “wide and undetermined prospects,” with “speculations of eternity and infinitude.”

“ But if there be a beauty or uncommonness
“ joined with this grandeur, as in a troubled
“ ocean, a heaven adorned with stars and meteors,
“ or a spacious landscape cut out into rivers,
“ woods, rocks, and meadows, the pleasure still

“ grows upon us, as it arises from more than a
“ single principle.”

The article prefixed to *beauty*, in the beginning of this sentence, might have been omitted, and the style have run, perhaps, to more advantage thus: “ But if beauty, or uncommonness, “ be joined to this grandeur — A landscape cut “ out into rivers, woods, &c.” seems unseasonably to imply an artificial formation, and had better have been expressed by, “ diversified with “ rivers, woods, &c.”

“ Every thing that is new or uncommon, “ raises a pleasure in the imagination, because it “ fills the soul with an agreeable surprise, gratifies its curiosity and gives it an idea of which it “ was not before possessed. We are indeed, so “ often conversant with one set of objects, and “ tired out with so many repeated shows of the “ same things, that whatever is new or uncommon contributes a little to vary human life, and “ to divert our minds, for a while, with the “ strangeness of its appearance. It serves us for a “ kind of refreshment, and takes off from that “ satiety we are apt to complain of in our usual “ and ordinary entertainments.”

The style in these sentences flows in an easy and agreeable manner. A severe critic might point out some expressions that would bear being retrenched. But this would alter the genius and character of Mr. Addison's style. We must always remember, that good composition admits of being carried on under many different forms. Style

must not be reduced to one precise standard. One writer may be as agreeable, by a pleasing diffuseness, when the subject bears, and his genius prompts it, as another by a concise and forcible manner. It is fit, however, to observe, that in the beginning of those sentences which we have at present before us, the phrase, “ raises a pleasure in the imagination,” is unquestionably too flat and feeble, and might easily be amended, by saying, “ affords pleasure to the imagination; and towards the end, there are two *of*’s, which grate harshly on the ear, in that phrase, “ takes off from that satiety we are apt to complain of;” where the correction is as easily made as in the other case, by substituting, “ diminishes that satiety of which we are apt to complain.” Such instances show the advantage of frequent reviews of what we have written, in order to give proper correctness and polish to our language.

“ It is this which bestows charms on a monster, and makes even the imperfections of nature please us. It is this that recommends variety where the mind is every instant called off to something new, and the attention not suffered to dwell too long, and waste itself on any particular object. It is this likewise, that improves what is great or beautiful, and makes it afford the mind a double entertainment.

Still the style proceeds with perspicuity, grace, and harmony. The full and ample assertion, with which each of these sentences is introduced, frequent,

on many occasions, with our author, is here proper and seasonable; as it was his intention to magnify, as much as possible, the effects of novelty and variety, and to draw our attention to them. His frequent use of *that*, instead of *which*, is another peculiarity of his style; but, on this occasion in particular, cannot be much commended, as, *it is this which*, seems, in every view, to be better than *it is this that*, three times repeated. I must, likewise, take notice, that the antecedent to, *it is this*, when critically considered, is not altogether proper. It refers, as we discover by the sense to *whatever is new or uncommon*. But as it is not good language to say, *whatever is new bestows charms on a monster*, one cannot avoid thinking that our author had done better to have begun the first of these three sentences, with saying, *It is novelty which bestows charms on a monster, &c.*

“ Groves, fields, and meadows, are at any
 “ season of the year pleasant to look upon; but
 “ never so much as in the opening of the spring,
 “ when they are all new and fresh, with their
 “ first gloss upon them, and not yet too much
 “ accustomed and familiar to the eye.

In this expression, “ never so much as in the
 “ opening of the spring,” there appears to be a small error in grammar; for when the construction is filled up, it must be read, *never so much pleasant*. Had he, to avoid this, said, *never so much so*, the grammatical error would have been prevented, but the language would have been awkward. Better to have said, “ but never so

“agreeable as in the opening of the spring. We readily say, the eye is accustomed to objects, but to say, as our author has done at the close of the sentence, that objects are *accustomed to the eye*, can scarcely be allowed in a prose composition.

“For this reason, there is nothing that more
 “enlivens a prospect than rivers, jetteaus, or falls
 “of water, where the scene is perpetually shifting
 “and entertaining the sight, every moment, with
 “something that is new. We are quickly tired
 “with looking at hills and vallies, where every
 “thing continues fixed and settled in the same
 “place and posture, but find our thoughts a
 “little agitated and relieved at the sight of such
 “objects as are ever in motion, and sliding away
 “from beneath the eye of the beholder.”

The first of these sentences is connected in too loose a manner with that which immediately preceded it. When he says, “for this reason, there
 “is nothing that more enlivens, &c.” we are entitled to look for the *reason*, in what he had just before said. But there we find no *reason* for what he is now going to assert, except that groves and meadows are most pleasant in the spring. We know that he has been speaking of the pleasure produced by novelty and variety, and our minds naturally recur to this, as the reason here alluded to; but his language does not properly express it. It is, indeed, one of the defects of this amiable writer, that his sentences are often too negligently connected with one another. His

meaning, upon the whole, we gather with ease from the tenor of his discourse. Yet this negligence prevents his sense from striking us with that force and evidence, which a more accurate juncture of parts would have produced. Bating this inaccuracy, these two sentences, especially the latter, are remarkably elegant and beautiful. The close, in particular, is uncommonly fine, and carries as much expressive harmony as the language can admit. It seems to paint, what he is describing, at once to the eye and the ear.—
“Such objects as are ever in motion, and sliding
“away from beneath the eye of the beholder.”—
Indeed, notwithstanding those small errors, which the strictness of critical examination obliges me to point out, it may be safely pronounced, that the two paragraphs which we have now considered in this paper, the one concerning greatness, and the other concerning novelty, are extremely worthy of Mr. Addison, and exhibit a style, which they who can successfully imitate, may esteem themselves happy.

“But there is nothing that makes its way more
“directly to the soul than beauty, which imme-
“diately diffuses a secret satisfaction and com-
“placency through the imagination, and gives a
“finishing to any thing that is great or uncom-
“mon. The very first discovery of it strikes the
“mind with an inward joy, and spreads a cheer-
“fulness and delight through all its faculties.”

Some degree of verbosity may be here discovered, and phrases repeated, which are

little more than the echo of one another; such as — “diffusing satisfaction and complacency through the imagination — striking the mind with inward joy — spreading cheerfulness and delight through all its faculties.” At the same time, I readily admit that this full and flowing style, even though it carry some redundancy, is not unsuitable to the gaiety of the subject on which the author is entering, and is more allowable here, than it would have been on some other occasions.

“There is not, perhaps, any real beauty or deformity more in one piece of matter than another; because we might have been so made; that whatever now appears loathsome to us, might have shown itself agreeable; but we find, by experience, that there are several modifications of matter, which the mind, without any previous consideration, pronounces at first sight beautiful or deformed.”

In this sentence there is nothing remarkable, in any view, to draw our attention. We may observe only, that the word *more*, towards the beginning, is not in its proper place, and that the preposition *in*, is wanting before *another*. The phrase ought to have stood thus — “beauty or deformity in one piece of matter, more than in another.”

“Thus we see, that every different species of sensible creatures has its different notions of beauty, and that each of them is most affected with the beauties of its own kind. This is

“no where more remarkable, than in birds of
“the same shape and proportion, when we often
“see the male determined in his courtship by the
“single grain or tincture of a feather, and never
“discovering any charms but in the color of its
“species.”

Neither is there here any particular elegance or felicity of language. — *Different sense of beauty* would have been a more proper expression to have been applied to irrational creatures, than as it stands, *different notions of beauty*. In the close of the second sentence, when the author says, *color of its species*, he is guilty of a considerable inaccuracy in changing the gender, as he had said in the same sentence, that the *male was determined in his courtship*.

“There is a second kind of beauty, that we
“find in the several products of art and nature,
“which does not work in the imagination with
“that warmth and violence, as the beauty that
“appears in our proper species, but is apt, how-
“ever, to raise in us a secret delight, and a kind
“of fondness for the places or objects in which we
“discover it.”

Still, I am sorry to say, we find little to praise. As in his enunciation of the subject, when beginning the former paragraph, he appeared to have been treating of beauty in general, in distinction from greatness or novelty; this *second kind of beauty* of which he here speaks, comes upon us in a sort of surprise, and it is only by degrees we learn, that formerly he had no more

in view than the beauty which the different species of sensible creatures find in one another. This *second kind of beauty*, he says, *we find in the several products of art and nature*. He undoubtedly means not in all, but *in several of the products of art and nature*; and ought so to have expressed himself; and in the place of *products*, to have used also the more proper word, *productions*. When he adds, that this kind of beauty “does not work in the imagination with that warmth and violence as the beauty that appears in our proper species;” the language would certainly have been more pure and elegant, if he had said, that it “does not work upon the imagination with such warmth and violence, as the beauty that appears in our own species.

“This consists either in the gaiety, or variety of colors, in the symmetry and proportion of parts, in the arrangement and disposition of bodies, or in a just mixture and concurrence of all together. Among these several kinds of beauty, the eye takes most delight in colors.

To the language here, I see no objection that can be made.

“We no where meet with a more glorious or pleasing show in nature, than what appears in the heavens at the rising and setting of the sun, which is wholly made up of those different stains of light, that show themselves in clouds of a different situation.

The chief ground of criticism on this sentence, is the disjointed situation of the relative *which*.

Grammatically, it refers to *the rising and setting of the sun*. But the author meant, that it should refer to *the show* which appears in the heavens at that time. It is too common among authors, when they are writing without much care, to make such particles as *this*, and *which*, refer not to any particular antecedent word, but to the tenor of some phrase, or perhaps the scope of some whole sentence, which has gone before. This practice saves them trouble in marshalling their words, and arranging a period: but, though it may leave their meaning intelligible, yet it renders that meaning much less perspicuous, determined, and precise, than it might otherwise have been. The error I have pointed out, might have been avoided by a small alteration in the construction of the sentence, after some such manner as this: “We no where meet with a more glorious
“and pleasing show in nature, than what is formed
“in the heavens at the rising and setting of the sun,
“by the different stains of light which show them-
“selves in clouds of different situations.” Our author writes, *in clouds of a different situation*, by which he means, clouds that differ in situation from each other. But, as this is neither the obvious nor grammatical meaning of his words, it was necessary to change the expression, as I have done, into the plural number.

“For this reason, we find the poets, who are
“always addressing themselves to the imagination,
“borrowing more of their epithets from colors
“than from any other topic.”

On this sentence nothing occurs, except a remark similar to what was made before, of loose connexion with the sentence which precedes. For though he begins with saying, *for this reason*, the foregoing sentence, which was employed about *the clouds* and *the sun*, gives no reason for the general proposition he now lays down. The *reason* to which he refers, was given two sentences before, when he observed that the eye takes more delight in colors than in any other beauty; and it was with that sentence that the present one should have stood immediately connected.

“ As the fancy delights in every thing that is
 “ great, strange, or beautiful, and is still more
 “ pleased, the more it finds of these perfections
 “ in the same object, so it is capable of receiving
 “ a new satisfaction by the assistance of another
 “ sense.”

Another sense here, means grammatically, *another sense than fancy*. For there is no other thing in the period to which this expression, *another sense*, can at all be opposed. He had not for some time made mention of any *sense* whatever. He forgot to add, what was undoubtedly in his thoughts, *another sense than that of sight*.

“ Thus any continued sound, as the music of
 “ birds, or a fall of water, awakens every moment
 “ the mind of the beholder, and makes him more
 “ attentive to the several beauties of the place
 “ which lie before him. Thus, if there arises a
 “ fragrancy of smells or perfumes, they heighten
 “ the pleasures of the imagination, and make

“ even the colors and verdure of the landscape
“ appear more agreeable; for the ideas of both
“ senses recommend each other, and are pleasanter
“ together, than when they enter the mind separately: as the different colors of a picture, when
“ they are well disposed, set off one another, and
“ receive an additional beauty from the advantage
“ of their situation.

Whether Mr. Addison's theory here be just or not, may be questioned. A continued sound, such as that of a fall of water, is so far from *awakening, every moment, the mind of the beholder*, that nothing is more likely to lull him asleep. It may, indeed, please the imagination, and heighten the beauties of the scene; but it produces this effect, by a soothing, not by an awakening influence. With regard to the style, nothing appears exceptionable. The flow, both of language and of ideas, is very agreeable. The author continues, to the end, the same pleasing train of thought, which had run through the rest of the paper: and leaves us agreeably employed in comparing together different degrees of beauty.

LECTURE XXII.

*Critical Examination of the Style in N° 413. of
the Spectator.*

“ **T**HOUGH in yesterday’s paper we considered
“ how every thing that is great, new or beauti-
“ ful, is apt to affect the imagination with plea-
“ sure, we must own, that it is impossible for
“ us to assign the necessary cause of this pleasure;
“ because we know neither the nature of an
“ idea, nor the substance of a human soul, which
“ might help us to discover the conformity or
“ disagreeableness of the one to the other; and,
“ therefore, for want of such a light, all that
“ we can do in speculations of this kind, is, to
“ reflect on those operations of the soul that
“ are most agreeable, and to range, under their
“ proper heads, what is pleasing or displeasing to
“ the mind, without being able to trace out the
“ several necessary and efficient causes from
“ whence the pleasure or displeasure arises.

This sentence, considered as an introductory one, must be acknowledged to be very faulty. An introductory sentence should never contain

any thing that can in any degree fatigue or puzzle the reader. When an author is entering on a new branch of his subject, informing us of what he has done, and what he purposes farther to do, we naturally expect that he should express himself in the simplest and most perspicuous manner possible. But the sentence now before us is crowded and indistinct; containing three separate propositions, which, as I shall afterwards show, required separate sentences to have unfolded them. Mr. Addison's chief excellency, as a writer, lay in describing and painting. There he is great; but in methodizing and reasoning, he is not so eminent. As besides the general fault of prolixity and indistinctness, this sentence contains several inaccuracies, I will be obliged to enter into a minute discussion of its structure and parts; a discussion, which to many readers will appear tedious, and which therefore they will naturally pass over; but which, to those who are studying composition, I hope may prove of some benefit.

*Though in yesterday's paper we considered—*The import of *though* is, *notwithstanding that*. When it appears in the beginning of a sentence, its relative generally is *yet*: and it is employed to warn us, after we have been informed of some truth, that we are not to infer from it some other thing which we might perhaps have expected to follow: as, “though virtue be the only road to happiness, yet it does not permit the unlimited gratification of our desires.” Now
it

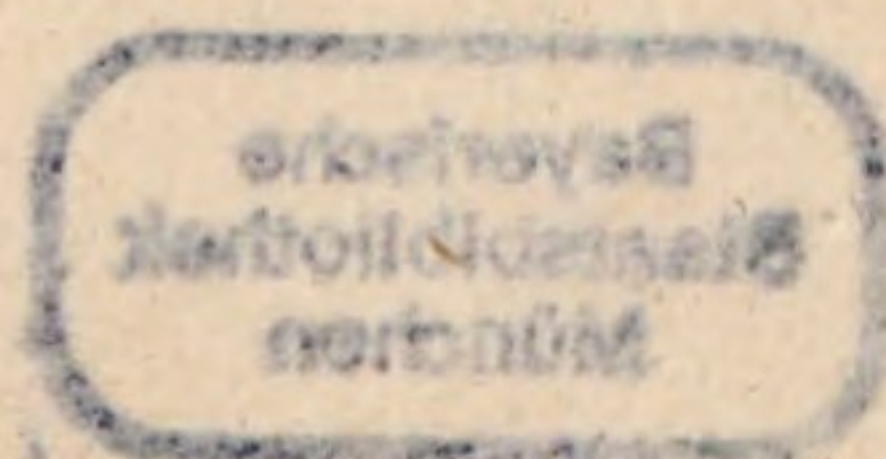
it is plain, that there was no such opposition between the subject of yesterday's paper, and what the author is now going to say, between his asserting a fact, and his not being able to assign the cause of that fact, as rendered the use of this adverbative particle *though*, either necessary or proper in the introduction.—*We considered how every thing that is great, new or beautiful, is apt to affect the imagination with pleasure.*—The adverb *how* signifies, either the means by which, or the manner in which, something is done. But, in truth, neither one nor other of these had been considered by our author. He had illustrated the fact alone, that they do affect the imagination with pleasure; and, with respect to the *quomodo*, or the *how*, he is so far from having considered it, that he is just now going to show that it cannot be explained, and that we must rest contented with the knowledge of the fact alone, and of its purpose or final cause.—*We must own, that it is impossible for us to assign the necessary cause* (he means, what is more commonly called the *efficient cause*) *of this pleasure, because we know neither the nature of an idea, nor the substance of a human soul.*—*The substance of a human soul* is certainly a very uncouth expression, and there appears no reason why he should have varied from the word *nature*, which would have equally applied to *idea* and to *soul*.

Which might, help us, our author proceeds, *to discover the conformity or disagreeableness of the one to the other.*—The *which*, at the beginning of

L. on R. 2.

7

this member of the period, is surely ungrammatical, as it is a relative, without any antecedent in all the sentence. It refers, by the construction, to the *nature of an idea, or the substance of a human soul*; but this is by no means the reference which the author intended. His meaning is, that *our knowing* the nature of an idea, and the substance of a human soul, might help us to discover the conformity or disagreeableness of the one to the other: and therefore the syntax absolutely required the word *knowledge* to have been inserted as the antecedent to *which*. I have before remarked, and the remark deserves to be repeated, that nothing is a more certain sign of careless composition than to make such relatives as *which*, not refer to any precise expression, but carry a loose and vague relation to the general strain of what had gone before. When our sentences run into this form, we may be assured there is something in the construction of them that requires alteration. The phrase of discovering *the conformity or disagreeableness of the one to the other* is likewise exceptionable; for *disagreeableness* neither forms a proper contrast to the other word, *conformity*, nor expresses what the author meant here (as far as any meaning can be gathered from his words), that is, a certain unsuitableness or want of conformity to the nature of the soul. To say the truth, this member of the sentence had much better have been omitted altogether. “The conformity or
“disagreeableness of an idea to the substance
“of a human soul,” is a phrase which conveys



to the mind no distinct nor intelligent conception whatever. The author had before given a sufficient reason for his not assigning the efficient cause of those pleasures of the imagination, because we neither know the nature of our own ideas nor of the soul: and this farther discussion about the conformity or disagreeableness of the nature of the one, to the substance of the other, affords no clear nor useful illustration.

And therefore, the sentence goes on, “for want
“of such a light, all that we can do in specula-
“tions of this kind, is to reflect on those opera-
“tions of the soul that are most agreeable, and
“to range under their proper heads what is
“pleasing or displeasing to the mind. —” The
two expressions in the beginning of this member,
therefore, and *for want of such a light*, evidently
refer to the same thing, and are quite synonymous.
One or other of them, therefore, had better
have been omitted. Instead of *to range under
their proper heads*, the language would have been
smoother, if *their* had been left out; — “without
“being able to trace out the several necessary
“and efficient causes from whence the pleasure
“or displeasure arises.” The expression, *from
whence*, though seemingly justified by very fre-
quent usage, is taxed by Dr. Johnson as a vi-
cious mode of speech; seeing *whence* alone, has
all the power of *from whence*, which therefore
appears an unnecessary reduplication. I am inclined
to think, that the whole of this last member of
the sentence had better have been dropped. The

period might have closed with full propriety, at the words, *pleasing or displeasing to the mind*. All that follows, suggests no idea that had not been fully conveyed in the preceding part of the sentence. It is a mere expletive adjection which might be omitted, not only without injury to the meaning, but to the great relief of a sentence already laboring under the multitude of words.

Having now finished the analysis of this long sentence, I am inclined to be of opinion, that if, on any occasion, we can adventure to alter Mr. Addison's style, it may be done to advantage here, by breaking down this period in the following manner: "In yesterday's paper, we
 " have shown that every thing which is great,
 " new, or beautiful, is apt to affect the ima-
 " gination with pleasure. We must own, that it
 " is impossible for us to assign the efficient cause
 " of this pleasure, because we know not the
 " nature either of an idea, or of the human
 " soul. All that we can do, therefore, in specu-
 " lations of this kind, is to reflect on the opera-
 " tions of the soul, which are most agreeable,
 " and to range under proper heads, what is
 " pleasing or displeasing to the mind." — We proceed now to the examination of the following sentences.

" Final causes lie more bare and open to our
 " observation, as there are often a great variety
 " that belong to the same effect; and these, though
 " they are not altogether so satisfactory, are
 " generally more useful than the other, as they

“ give us greater occasion of admiring the goodness and wisdom of the first contriver.

Though some difference might be traced between the sense of *bare* and *open*, yet as they are here employed, they are so nearly synonymous, that one of them was sufficient. It would have been enough to have said, *final causes lie more open to observation*.—One can scarcely help observing here, that the obviousness of final causes does not proceed, as Mr. Addison supposes, from a variety of them concurring in the same effect, which is often not the case; but from our being able to ascertain more clearly, from our own experience, the congruity of a final cause with the circumstances of our condition; whereas the constituent parts of subjects, whence efficient causes proceed, lie for most part beyond the reach of our faculties. But as this remark respects the thought more than the style, it is sufficient for us to observe, that when he says, “ a great variety that belong to the same effect,” the expression, strictly considered, is not altogether proper. The accessory is properly said to belong to the principal; not the principal to the accessory. Now an effect is considered as the accessory or consequence of its cause; and therefore, though we might well say a variety of effects belong to the same cause, it seems not so proper to say, that a variety of causes belong to the same effect.

“ One of the final causes of our delight in
“ any thing that is great may be this: The

“supreme author of our being has so formed
“the soul of man, that nothing but himself can
“be its last, adequate, and proper happiness.
“Because, therefore, a great part of our happi-
“ness must arise from the contemplation of his
“being, that he might give our souls a just relish
“of such a contemplation, he has made them
“naturally delight in the apprehension of what
“is great or unlimited.”

The concurrence of two conjunctions, *because*,
therefore, forms rather a harsh and unpleasing be-
ginning of the last of these sentences; and, in
the close, one would think, that the author might
have devised a happier word than *apprehension*,
to be applied to what is *unlimited*. But that I
may not be thought hypercritical, I shall make
no farther observation on these sentences.

“Our admiration, which is a very pleasing
“motion of the mind, immediately rises at the
“consideration of any object that takes up a
“good deal of room in the fancy, and, by
“consequence, will improve into the highest
“pitch of astonishment and devotion, when we
“contemplate his nature, that is neither circum-
“scribed by time nor place, nor to be compre-
“hended by the largest capacity of a created
“being.”

Here, our author's style rises beautifully along
with the thought. However inaccurate he may
sometimes be when coolly philosophizing, yet,
whenever his fancy is awakened by description,
or his mind, as here, warmed with some glowing

sentiment, he presently becomes great, and discovers, in his language, the hand of a master. Every one must observe, with what felicity this period is constructed. The words are long and majestic. The members rise one above another, and conduct the sentence, at last, to that full and harmonious close, which leaves upon the mind such an impression, as the author intended to leave, of something uncommonly great, awful, and magnificent.

“ He has annexed a secret pleasure to the idea
 “ of any thing that is new or uncommon, that
 “ he might encourage us in the pursuit of know-
 “ ledge, and engage us to search into the
 “ wonders of creation; for every new idea brings
 “ such a pleasure along with it, as rewards the
 “ pains we have taken in its acquisition, and,
 “ consequently, serves as a motive to put us
 “ upon fresh discoveries.

The language, in this sentence, is clear and precise: only, we cannot but observe, in this, and the two following sentences, which are constructed in the same manner, a strong proof of Mr. Addison's unreasonable partiality to the particle *that*, in preference to *which*— “ annexed
 “ a secret pleasure to the idea of any thing that
 “ is new or uncommon, that he might encourage
 “ us.” — Here the first *that*, stands for a relative pronoun, and the next *that*, at the distance only of four words, is a conjunction. This confusion of sounds serves to embarrass style. Much better, sure, to have said, “ the idea of any thing which

“ is new or uncommon, that he might encourage.” — The expression with which the sentence concludes — “ a motive to put us upon fresh discoveries ” — is flat, and in some degree, improper. He should have said, “ put us upon making fresh discoveries ” — or rather, “ serves as a motive inciting us to make fresh discoveries.”

“ He has made every thing that is beautiful in our own species, pleasant, that all creatures might be tempted to multiply their kind, and fill the world with inhabitants; for, 'tis very remarkable, that wherever nature is crost in the production of a monster (the result of any unnatural mixture) the breed is incapable of propagating its likeness, and of founding a new order of creatures; so that, unless all animals were allured by the beauty of their own species, generation would be at an end, and the earth unpeopled.”

Here we must, however reluctantly, return to the employment of censure : for this is among the worst sentences our author ever wrote, and contains a variety of blemishes. Taken as a whole, it is extremely deficient in unity. Instead of a complete proposition, it contains a sort of chain of reasoning, the links of which are so ill put together, that it is with difficulty we can trace the connexion; and, unless we take the trouble of perusing it several times, it will leave nothing on the mind but an indistinct and obscure impression.

Besides this general fault, respecting the meaning, it contains some great inaccuracies in

language. First, God's having made every thing which *is beautiful in our own species* (that is in the human species) *pleasant*, is certainly no motive for *all creatures*, for beasts, and birds, and fishes, *to multiply their kind*. What the author meant to say, though he has expressed himself in so erroneous a manner, undoubtedly was, "in all the different orders of creatures, he has made every thing, which is beautiful, in their own species, pleasant, that all creatures might be tempted to multiply their kind." The second member of the sentence is still worse. *For, it is very remarkable, that wherever nature is crost in the production of a monster, &c.* The reason which he here gives, for the preceding assertion, intimated by the casual particle *for*, is far from being obvious. The connexion of thought is not readily apparent, and would have required an intermediate step, to render it distinct. But, what does he mean, by *nature being crost in the production of a monster*? One might understand him to mean, "disappointed in its intention of producing a monster," as when we say, one is crost in his pursuits, we mean, that he is disappointed in accomplishing the end which he intended. Had he said, *crost by the production of a monster*, the sense would have been more intelligible. But the proper rectification of the expression would be to insert the adverb *as*, before the preposition *in*, after this manner—*wherever nature is crost, as in the production of a monster*,—the insertion of this particle *as*, throws so much

light on the construction of this member of the sentence, that I am very much inclined to believe, it had stood thus, originally, in our author's manuscript; and that the present reading is a typographical error, which, having crept into the first edition of the Spectator, ran through all the subsequent ones.

“ In the last place, he has made every thing
“ that is beautiful, in all other objects, pleasant,
“ or rather has made so many objects appear
“ beautiful, that he might render the whole
“ creation more gay and delightful. He has given,
“ almost, every thing about us the power of
“ raising an agreeable idea in the imagination;
“ so that it is impossible for us to behold his
“ works with coldness or indifference, and to
“ survey so many beauties without a secret satis-
“ faction and complacency.”

The idea, here, is so just, and the language, so clear, flowing, and agreeable, that, to remark any diffuseness which may be attributed to these sentences, would be justly esteemed hypercritical.

“ Things would make but a poor appearance
“ to the eye, if we saw them only in their proper
“ figures and motions: and what reason can we
“ assign for their exciting in us, many of those
“ ideas which are different from any thing that
“ exists in the objects themselves (for such are
“ light and colors), were it not to add super-
“ numerary ornaments to the universe, and
“ make it more agreeable to the imagination?”

Our author is now entering on a theory, which he is about to illustrate, if not with much philosophical accuracy, yet, with great beauty of fancy, and glow of expression. A strong instance of his want of accuracy, appears in the manner in which he opens the subject. For what meaning is there in things *exciting in us many of those ideas which are different from any thing that exists in the objects?* No one, sure, ever imagined, that our ideas exist in the objects. Ideas, it is agreed on all hands, can exist no where but in the mind. What Mr. Locke's philosophy teaches, and what our author should have said, is, *exciting in us many ideas of qualities which are different from any thing that exists in the objects.* The ungraceful parenthesis which follows, *for such are light and colors*, had far better have been avoided, and incorporated with the rest of the sentence, in this manner: — “exciting in us
“ many ideas of qualities, such as light and colors,
“ which are different from any thing that exists
“ in the objects.

“ We are everywhere entertained with pleasing
“ shows, and apparitions. We discover imaginary
“ glories in the heavens, and in the earth, and
“ see some of this visionary beauty poured out
“ upon the whole creation: but what a rough
“ unsightly sketch of nature should we be enter-
“ tained with, did all her coloring disappear,
“ and the several distinctions of light and shade
“ vanish? In short, our souls are delightfully
“ lost and bewildered in a pleasing delusion; and

“ we walk about like the enchanted hero of a
“ romance, who sees beautiful castles, woods,
“ and meadows; and, at the same time, hears
“ the warbling of birds, and the purling of streams;
“ but, upon the finishing of some secret spell,
“ the fantastic scene breaks up, and the discon-
“ solate knight finds himself on a barren heath,
“ or in a solitary desert.”

After having been obliged to point out several inaccuracies, I return with much more pleasure to the display of beauties, for which we have now full scope; for these two sentences are such as do the highest honor to Mr. Addison's talents as a writer. Warmed with the idea he had laid hold of, his delicate sensibility to the beauty of nature, is finely displayed in the illustration of it. The style is flowing and full; without being too diffuse. It is flowery, but not gaudy; elevated, but not ostentatious.

Amidst this blaze of beauties, it is necessary for us to remark one or two inaccuracies. When it is said, towards the close of the first of those sentences, “ what a rough unsightly sketch of
“ nature should we be entertained with” the preposition *with*, should have been placed at the beginning, rather than at the end of this member; and the word *entertained*, is both improperly applied here, and carelessly repeated from the former part of the sentence. It was there employed according to its more common use, as relating to agreeable objects. “ We are every where
“ entertained with pleasing shows.” Here, it

would have been more proper to have changed the phrase, and said, “with what a rough unfightly sketch of nature should we be presented.” — At the close of the second sentence, where it is said, “the fantastic scene breaks up,” the expression is lively, but not altogether justifiable. An assembly *breaks up*; a scene *closes* or *disappears*.

Bating these two slight inaccuracies, the style, here, is not only correct, but perfectly elegant. The most striking beauty of the passage arises from the happy simile which the author employs, and the fine illustration which it gives to the thought. The *enchanted hero*, the *beautiful castles*, the *fantastic scene*, the *secret spell*, the *disconsolate knight*, are terms chosen with the utmost felicity, and strongly recal all those romantic ideas with which he intended to amuse our imagination. Few authors are more successful in their imagery than Mr. Addison; and few passages in his works, or in those of any author, are more beautiful and picturesque, than that on which we have been commenting.

“It is not improbable, that something like this may be the state of the soul after its first separation, in respect of the images it will receive from matter; though, indeed, the ideas of colors are so pleasing and beautiful in the imagination, that it is possible the soul will not be deprived of them, but, perhaps, find them excited by some other occasional cause, as they are, at present, by the different

“impressions of the subtile matter on the organ
“of sight.”

As all human things, after having attained the summit, begin to decline, we must acknowledge, that, in this sentence, there is a sensible falling off from the beauty of what went before. It is broken, and deficient in unity. Its parts are not sufficiently compacted. It contains, besides, some faulty expressions. When it is said, “some-
“thing like this may be the state of the soul,” to the pronoun *this*, there is no determined antecedent; it refers to the general import of the preceding description, which, as I have several times remarked, always renders style clumsy and inelegant, if not obscure—“the state of the
“soul after its first separation,” appears to be an incomplete phrase, and *first*, seems an useless, and even an improper word. More distinct if he had said, — “state of the soul immediately on
“its separation from the body” — the adverb *perhaps*, is redundant, after having just before said, *it is possible*.

“I have here supposed, that my reader is
“acquainted with that great modern discovery,
“which is, at present, universally acknowledged
“by all the inquirers into natural philosophy;
“namely, that light and colors, as apprehended
“by the imagination, are only ideas in the mind,
“and not qualities that have any existence in
“matter. As this is a truth which has been proved
“incontestibly by many modern philosophers,

“ and is, indeed, one of the finest speculations
 “ in that science, if the English reader would
 “ see the notion explained at large, he may
 “ find it in the eighth chapter of the second book
 “ of Mr. Locke’s Essay on the Human Under-
 “ standing.”

In these two concluding sentences, the author, hastening to finish, appears to write rather carelessly. In the first of them, a manifest tautology occurs, when he speaks of what is “ universally acknowledged by all inquirers.” In the second, when he calls “ a truth which has been incontrovertibly proved;” first a *speculation*, and afterwards, a *notion*, the language surely is not very accurate. When he adds, “ one of the finest speculations in that science,” it does not, at first, appear what science he means. One would imagine, he meant to refer to *modern philosophers*; for *natural philosophy* (to which, doubtless, he refers) stands at much too great a distance to be the proper or obvious antecedent to the pronoun *that*. The circumstance towards the close, “ if the English reader would see the notion explained at large, he may find it,” is properly taken notice of by the author of the *Elements of Criticism*, as wrong arranged, and is rectified thus: “ the English reader, if he would see the notion explained at large, may find it, &c.”

In concluding the examination of this paper, we may observe, that, though not a very long

one, it exhibits a striking view both of the beauties, and the defects, of Mr. Addison's style. It contains some of the best, and some of the worst sentences, that are to be found in his works. But upon the whole, it is an agreeable and elegant essay.

LECTURE XXIII.

*Critical Examination of the Style in N^o 414. of
the Spectator.*

“ **I** F we consider the works of nature and art,
“ as they are qualified to entertain the imagina-
“ tion, we shall find the last very defective in
“ comparifon of the former; for though they
“ may fometimes appear as beautiful or ftrange,
“ they can have nothing in them of that vaftnefs
“ and immenfity which afford fo great an enter-
“ tainment to the mind of the beholder.

I had occafion formerly to obferve, that an introductory fentence fhould always be fhort and fimple, and contain no more matter than is neceffary for opening the fubject. This fentence leads to a repetition of this obfervation, as it contains both an affertion and the proof of that affertion; two things which, for the moft part, but efpecially at firft fetting out, are with more advantage kept feparate. It would certainly have been better, if this fentence had contained only the affertion, ending with the word *former*; and if a new one

had then begun, entering on the proofs of nature's superiority over art, which is the subject continued to the end of the paragraph. The proper division of the period I shall point out, after having first made a few observations which occur on different parts of it.

If we consider the works — Perhaps it might have been preferable, if our author had begun, with saying, *when we consider the works*. — Discourse ought always to begin, when it is possible, with a clear proposition. The *if*, which is here employed, converts the sentence into a supposition, which is always in some degree entangling, and proper to be used only when the course of reasoning renders it necessary. As this observation however may perhaps, be considered as over-refined, and as the sense would have remained the same in either form of expression, I do not mean to charge our author with any error on this account. We cannot absolve him from inaccuracy in what immediately follows — *the works of nature and art*. It is the scope of the author throughout this whole paper, to compare nature and art together, and to oppose them in several views to each other. Certainly therefore, in the beginning, he ought to have kept them as distinct as possible, by interposing the preposition, and saying *the works of nature, and of art*. As the words stand at present, they would lead us to think that he is going to treat of these works, not as contrasted, but as connected; as united in forming one whole. When

I speak of body and soul as united in the human nature, I would interpose neither article nor preposition between them; "man is compounded of soul and body." But the case is altered, if I mean to distinguish them from each other; then I represent them as separate; and say, "I am to treat of the interests of the soul, and of the body."

Though they may sometimes appear as beautiful or strange—I cannot help considering this as a loose member of the period. It does not clearly appear at first what the antecedent is to *they*. In reading onwards, we see the works of art to be meant; but from the structure of the sentence, *they* might be understood to refer to *the former*, as well as to *the last*. In what follows, there is a greater ambiguity — *may sometimes appear as beautiful or strange*. It is very doubtful in what sense we are to understand *as*, in this passage. For, according as it is accented in reading, it may signify, that *they appear equally beautiful or strange*, to wit, with the works of nature; and then it has the force of the Latin *tam*: or it may signify no more than that *they appear in the light of beautiful and strange*; and then it has the force of the Latin *tanquam*, without importing any comparison. An expression so ambiguous, is always faulty; and it is doubly so here; because; if the author intended the former sense, and meant (as seems most probable) to employ *as* for a mark of comparison, it was necessary to have mentioned both the compared objects; whereas only one

member of the comparison is here mentioned, viz. The works of art; and if he intended the latter sense *as* was in that case superfluous and encumbering, and he had better have said simply, *appear beautiful or strange*.—The epithet *strange*, which Mr. Addison applies to the works of art, cannot be praised. *Strange works*, appears not by any means a happy expression to signify what he here intends, which is new or uncommon.

The sentence concludes with much harmony and dignity — “ they can have nothing in them
“ of that vastness and immensity which afford so
“ great an entertainment to the mind of the be-
“ holder.” There is here a fulness and grandeur of expression well suited to the subject; though, perhaps *entertainment* is not quite the proper word for expressing the effect which vastness and immensity have upon the mind. Reviewing the observations that have been made on this period, it might, I think, with advantage, be resolved into two sentences somewhat after this manner:
“ When we consider the works of nature and of
“ art, as they are qualified to entertain the ima-
“ gination, we shall find the latter very defective
“ in comparison of the former. The works of
“ art may sometimes appear no less beautiful or
“ uncommon than those of nature; but they can
“ have nothing of that vastness and immensity
“ which so highly transport the mind of the be-
“ holder.”

“ The one”, proceeds our author in the next sentence, may be as polite and delicate as the

“ other; but can never show herself so august
“ and magnificent in the design.

The *one* and the *other*, in the first part of this sentence, must unquestionably refer to the *works of nature and of art*. For of these he had been speaking immediately before; and with reference to the plural word, *works*, had employed the plural pronoun *they*. But in the course of the sentence, he drops this construction; and passes very incongruously to the personification of art—*can never show herself*. — To render his style consistent, *art*, and not *the works of art*, should have been made the nominative in this sentence. — “ Art may be as polite and delicate as nature,
“ but can never show herself.”—*Polite* is a term oftener applied to persons and to manners, than to things; and is employed to signify their being highly civilized. Polished, or refined, was the idea which the author had in view. Though the general turn of this sentence be elegant, yet, in order to render it perfect, I must observe, that the concluding words, *in the design*, should either have been altogether omitted, or something should have been properly opposed to them in the preceding member of the period, thus: “ Art may,
“ in the execution, be as polished and delicate
“ as nature; but, in the design, can never show
“ herself so august and magnificent.”

“ There is something more bold and masterly
“ in the rough, careless strokes of nature, than
“ in the nice touches and embellishments of
“ art.”

This sentence is perfectly happy and elegant; and carries, in all the expression that *curiosa felicitas*, for which Mr. Addison is so often remarkable. *Bold and masterly*, are words applied with the utmost propriety. The *strokes of nature* are finely opposed to *the touches of art*; and the *rough strokes to the nice touches*; the former painting the freedom and ease of nature, and the other, the diminutive exactness of art; while both are introduced before us as different performers, and their respective merits in execution very justly contrasted with each other.

“The beauties of the most stately garden or
“palace lie in a narrow compass, the imagination
“immediately runs them over, and requires some-
“thing else to gratify her; but in the wide
“fields of nature, the sight wanders up and down
“without confinement, and is fed with an infinite
“variety of images, without any certain stint
“or number.

This sentence is not altogether so correct and elegant as the former. It carries, however, in the main, the character of our author's style; not strictly accurate, but agreeable, easy, and unaffected; enlivened too with a slight personification of the imagination, which gives a gaiety to the period. Perhaps it had been better, if this personification of the imagination, with which the sentence is introduced, had been continued throughout, and not changed unnecessarily, and even improperly, into *sight*, in the second member, which is contrary both to unity

and elegance. It might have stood thus — “ the
 “ imagination immediately runs them over, and
 “ requires something else to gratify her; but in
 “ the wide fields of nature, she wanders up and
 “ down without confinement.” — The epithet
stately, which the author uses in the beginning
 of the sentence, applies with more propriety to
palaces, than to *gardens*. The close of the sentence,
without any certain stint or number, may be ob-
 jected to; as both superfluous and ungraceful. It
 might perhaps have terminated better in this
 manner — “ she is fed with an infinite variety of
 “ images, and wanders up and down without
 “ confinement.”

“ For this reason, we always find the poet in
 “ love with a country life, where nature appears
 “ in the greatest perfection and furnishes out all
 “ those scenes that are most apt to delight the
 “ imagination.”

There is nothing in this sentence to attract
 particular attention. One would think it was
 rather the *country*, than a *country life*, on which
 the remark here made should rest. A *country life*
 may be productive of simplicity of manners, and
 of other virtues; but it is to *the country* itself,
 that the properties here mentioned belong, of
 displaying the beauties of nature, and furnishing
 those scenes which delight the imagination.

“ But though there are several of these wild
 “ scenes that are more delightful than any arti-
 “ ficial shows, yet we find the works of nature
 “ still more pleasant, the more they resemble those

“ of art; for in this case, our pleasure rises from
“ a double principle; from the agreeableness of
“ the objects to the eye, and from their simili-
“ tude to other objects: we are pleased, as well
“ with comparing their beauties, as with survey-
“ ing them, and can represent them to our minds
“ either as copies or as originals. Hence it is,
“ that we take delight in a prospect which is
“ well laid out, and diversified with fields and
“ meadows, woods and rivers; in those accidental
“ landscapes of trees, clouds, and cities, that
“ are sometimes found in the veins of marble,
“ in the curious fretworks of rocks and grottos;
“ and, in a word, in any thing that hath such
“ a degree of variety and regularity as may seem
“ the effect of design, in what we call the
“ works of chance.

The style in the two sentences, which compose this paragraph, is smooth and perspicuous. It lies open in some places to criticism; but lest the reader should tire of what he may consider as petty remarks, I shall pass over any which these sentences suggest; the rather too, as the idea which they present to us, of nature's resembling art, of art's being considered as an original, and nature as a copy, seems not very distinct nor well brought out, nor indeed very material to our author's purpose.

“ If the products of nature rise in value, ac-
“ cording as they more or less resemble those of art,
“ we may be sure that artificial works receive a
“ greater advantage from the resemblance of such

“ as are natural ; because here the similitude is not
 “ only pleasant, but the pattern more perfect.”

It is necessary to our present design, to point out two considerable inaccuracies which occur in this sentence. *If the products* (he had better have said the “ productions) of nature rise in value, “ according as they more or less resemble those “ of art.” — Does he mean, that these productions *rise in value*, both according as they *more resemble*, and as they *less resemble*, those of art? His meaning undoubtedly is, that they rise in value only, according as they *more resemble* them: and therefore, either these words, *or less*, must be struck out, or the sentence must run thus — “ productions of nature rise or sink in value, “ according as they more or less resemble.” — The present construction of the sentence has plainly been owing to hasty and careless writing.

The other inaccuracy is towards the end of the sentence, and serves to illustrate a rule which I formerly gave, concerning the position of adverbs. The author says, — “ because here, “ the similitude is not only pleasant, but the “ pattern more perfect.” Here, by the position of the adverb *only*, we are led to imagine that he is going to give some other property of the similitude, that it is *not only pleasant*, as he says, but more than pleasant; it is useful, or, on some account or other, valuable. Whereas, he is going to oppose another thing to the *similitude* itself, and not to this property of its being *pleasant*; and therefore, the right collocation, beyond doubt,

was, "because here, not only the similitude is pleasant, but the pattern more perfect:" the contrast lying, not between *pleasant* and *more perfect*, but between *similitude* and *pattern*. — Much of the clearness and neatness of style depends on such attentions as these.

"The prettiest landscape I ever saw, was one drawn on the walls of a dark room, which stood opposite on one side to a navigable river, and, on the other, to a park. The experiment is very common in optics."

In the description of the landscape which follows, Mr. Addison is abundantly happy; but in this introduction to it, he is obscure and indistinct. One who had not seen the experiment of the camera obscura, could comprehend nothing of what he meant. And even, after we understand what he points at, we are at some loss, whether to understand his description as of one continued landscape, or of two different ones, produced by the projection of two camera obscuras on opposite walls. The scene, which I am inclined to think Mr. Addison here refers to, is Greenwich park, with the prospect of the Thames, as seen by a camera obscura, which is placed in a small room in the upper story of the observatory; where I remember to have seen, many years ago, the whole scene here described, corresponding so much to Mr. Addison's account of it in this passage, that, at the time, it recalled it to my memory. As the observatory stands in the middle of the park, it overlooks, from one side, both

the river and the park, and the objects afterwards mentioned, the ships, the trees, and the deer, are presented in one view, without needing any assistance from opposite walls. Put into plainer language, the sentence might run thus: "The prettiest landscape I ever saw, was one formed by a camera obscura, a common optical instrument, on the wall of a dark room, which overlooked a navigable river and a park."

"Here you might discover the waves and fluctuations of the water in strong and proper colors, with the picture of a ship entering at one end, and sailing by degrees through the whole piece. On another, there appeared the green shadows of trees, waving to and fro with the wind, and herds of deer among them in miniature, leaping about upon the wall."

Bating one or two small inaccuracies, this is beautiful and lively painting. The principal inaccuracy lies in the connexion of the two sentences, *here*, and *on another*. I suppose the author meant, *on one side*, and *on another side*. As it stands, *another* is ungrammatical, having nothing to which it refers. But the fluctuations of the water, the ship entering and sailing on by degrees, the trees waving in the wind, and the herds of deer among them leaping about, is all very elegant, and gives a beautiful conception of the scene meant to be described.

"I must confess the novelty of such a sight, may be one occasion of its pleasantness to the imagination; but certainly the chief reason, is

“ its nearer resemblance to nature ; as it does
 “ not only , like other pictures , give the color
 “ and figure , but the motions of the things it
 “ represents.”

In this sentence there is nothing remarkable , either to be praised or blamed. In the conclusion, instead of *the things it represents* , the regularity of correct style requires *the things which it represents*. In the beginning , as *one occasion* and the *chief reason* are opposed to one another , I should think it better to have repeated the same word — “ one
 “ reason of its pleasantness to the imagination ; but
 “ certainly the chief reason is , &c.”

“ We have before observed , that there is
 “ generally , in nature , something more grand
 “ and august than what we meet with in the
 “ curiosities of art. When , therefore , we see
 “ this imitated in any measure , it gives us a
 “ nobler and more exalted kind of pleasure ,
 “ than what we receive from the nicer and more
 “ accurate productions of art.”

It would have been better to have avoided terminating these two sentences in a manner so similar to each other ; *curiosities of art* — *productions of art*.

“ On this account , our English gardens are
 “ not so entertaining to the fancy as those in
 “ France and Italy , where we see a large extent
 “ of ground covered over with an agreeable
 “ mixture of garden and forest , which represents
 “ every where an artificial rudeness , much more
 “ charming than that neatness and elegance which
 “ we meet with in those of our own country.”

The expression “represent every where an artificial rudeness,” is so inaccurate, that I am inclined to think, what stood in Mr. Addison’s manuscript must have been — *present every where*. — For the mixture of garden and forest does not *represent*, but actually *exhibits* or *presents*, artificial rudeness. That mixture *represents* indeed *natural rudeness*, that is, is designed to imitate it; but it in reality *is*, and *presents*, *artificial rudeness*.

“It might indeed be of ill consequence to the public, as well as unprofitable to private persons, to alienate so much ground from pasturage and the plough, in many parts of a country that is so well peopled and cultivated to a far greater advantage. But why may not a whole estate be thrown into a kind of garden by frequent plantations, that may turn as much to the profit as the pleasure of the owner? A marsh overgrown with willows, or a mountain shaded with oaks, are not only more beautiful, but more beneficial, than when they lie bare and unadorned. Fields of corn make a pleasant prospect; and if the walks were a little taken care of that lie between them, and the natural embroidery of the meadows were helped and improved by some small additions of art, and the several rows of hedges were set off by trees and flowers that the soil was capable of receiving, a man might make a pretty landscape of his own possessions.”

The ideas here are just, and the style is easy and perspicuous, though in some places bordering

on the careles. In that passage, for instance, “if the walks were a little taken care of that lie between them” — one member is clearly out of its place, and the turn of the phrase, *a little taken care of*, is vulgar and colloquial. Much better, if it had run thus — “if a little care were bestowed on the walks that lie between them.”

“Writers who have given us an account of China, tell us, the inhabitants of that country laugh at the plantations of our Europeans, which are laid out by the rule and the line; because, they say, any one may place trees in equal rows and uniform figures. They chuse rather to show a genius in works of this nature, and therefore always conceal the art by which they direct themselves. They have a word, it seems, in their language, by which they express the particular beauty of a plantation, that thus strikes the imagination at first sight, without discovering what it is that has so agreeable an effect.”

These sentences furnish occasion for no remark, except that in the last of them, *particular* is improperly used instead of *peculiar* — “the peculiar beauty of a plantation that thus strikes the imagination,” was the phrase to have conveyed the idea which the author meant; namely, the beauty which distinguishes it from plantations of another kind.

“Our British gardeners, on the contrary, instead of humoring nature, love to deviate

“ from it as much as possible. Our trees rise in
“ cones, globes, and pyramids. We see the marks
“ of the scissars on every plant and bush.”

These sentences are lively and elegant. They make an agreeable diversity from the strain of those which went before; and are marked with the hand of Mr. Addison. I have to remark only, that, in the phrase, “ instead of humoring nature, “ love to deviate from it — *humoring* and *deviating*,” are terms not properly opposed to each other; a sort of personification of nature is begun in the first of them, which is not supported in the second. — To *humoring*, was to have been opposed, *thwarting* — or if *deviating* was kept, *following*, or *going along with nature*, was to have been used.

“ I do not know whether I am singular in
“ my opinion, but, for my own part, I would
“ rather look upon a tree, in all its luxuriance
“ and diffusion of boughs and branches, than
“ when it is thus cut and trimmed into a mathe-
“ matical figure; and cannot but fancy that an
“ orchard, in flower, looks infinitely more de-
“ lightful, than all the little labyrinths of the
“ most finished parterre.”

This sentence is extremely harmonious, and every way beautiful. It carries all the characteristics of our author's natural, graceful, and flowing language. — A tree, in “ all its luxuriance and “ diffusion of boughs and branches,” is a remarkably happy expression. The author seems to become luxuriant in describing an object which is so, and thereby renders the sound a perfect echo to the sense,

“ But as our great modellers of gardens have
“ their magazines of plants to dispose of, it is
“ very natural in them, to tear up all the beauti-
“ ful plantations of fruit trees, and contrive a
“ plan that may most turn to their profit, in
“ taking off their evergreens, and the like move-
“ able plants, with which their shops are plen-
“ tifully stocked.”

An author should always study to conclude,
when it is in his power, with grace and dignity.
It is somewhat unfortunate, that this paper did
not end, as it might very well have done, with
the former beautiful period. The impression left
on the mind by the beauties of nature, with
which he had been entertaining us, would then
have been more agreeable. But in this sentence
there is a great falling off; and we return with
pain from those pleasing objects, to the insignifi-
cant contents of a nursery-man's shop.

LECTURE XXIV.

Critical Examination of the Style in a Passage of Dean Swift's Writings.

MY design, in the four preceding lectures, was not merely to appreciate the merit of Mr. Addison's style, by pointing out the faults and the beauties that are mingled in the writings of that great author. They were not composed with any view to gain the reputation of a critic; but intended for the assistance of such as are desirous of studying the most proper and elegant construction of sentences in the English language. To such, it is hoped, they may be of advantage; as the proper application of rules respecting the style, will always be best learned by means of the illustration which examples afford. I conceived that examples, taken, from the writings of an author so justly esteemed, would, on that account, not only be more attended to, but would also produce this good effect, of familiarizing those who study composition with the style of a writer, from whom they may, upon the whole, derive great benefit. With the same view,

I shall, in this lecture, give one critical exercise more of the same kind, upon the style of an author of a different character, Dean Swift; repeating the intimation I gave formerly, that such as stand in need of no assistance of this kind, and who, therefore, will naturally consider such minute discussions concerning the propriety of words, and structure of sentences, as beneath their attention, had best pass over what will seem to them a tedious part of the work.

I formerly gave the general character of Dean Swift's style. He is esteemed one of our most correct writers. His style is of the plain and simple kind; free of all affectation, and all superfluity; perspicuous, manly, and pure. These are its advantages. But we are not to look for much ornament and grace in it *. On the contrary, Dean Swift seems to have slighted and despised the ornaments of language, rather than to have studied them. His arrangement is often loose and negligent. In elegant, musical, and figurative

* I am glad to find, that, in my judgment concerning this author's composition, I have coincided with the opinion of a very able critic: "This easy and safe conveyance of meaning, " it was Swift's desire to attain, and for having attained, " he certainly deserves praise, though, perhaps, not the highest " praise. For purposes merely didactic, when something is " to be told that was not known before, it is in the highest " degree proper: but against that inattention by which known " truths are suffered to be neglected, it makes no provision, " it instructs, but does not persuade." Johnson's Lives of the Poets; in Swift.

language, he is much inferior to Mr. Addison. His manner of writing carries in it the character of one who rests altogether upon his sense, and aims at no more than giving his meaning in a clear and concise manner.

That part of his writings, which I shall now examine, is the beginning of his treatise, entitled, "A Proposal for correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English tongue," in a letter addressed to the Earl of Oxford, then Lord High Treasurer. I was led, by the nature of the subject, to chuse this treatise: but, in justice to the Dean, I must observe, that, after having examined it, I do not esteem it one of his most correct productions; but am apt to think it has been more hastily composed than some other of them. It bears the title and form of a letter; but it is, however, in truth, a treatise designed for the public: and, therefore, in examining it, we cannot proceed upon the indulgence due to an epistolary correspondence. When a man addresses himself to a friend only, it is sufficient if he makes himself fully understood by him; but when an author writes for the public, whether he assume the form of an epistle or not, we are always entitled to expect, that he shall express himself with accuracy and care. Our author begins thus:

"What I had the honor of mentioning to
"your Lordship, sometime ago, in conversation,
"was not a new thought, just then started by
"accident or occasion, but the result of long

“ reflection; and I have been confirmed in my
“ sentiments by the opinion of some very judi-
“ cious persons with whom I consulted.”

The disposition of circumstances in a sentence, such as serve to limit or to qualify some assertion, or to denote time and place, I formerly showed to be a matter of nicety; and I observed, that it ought to be always held a rule, not to crowd such circumstances together, but rather to intermix them with more capital words, in such different parts of the sentence as can admit them naturally. Here are two circumstances of this kind placed together, which had better have been separated, *sometime ago, in conversation* — better thus: — “ What I had the honor, some-
“ time ago, of mentioning to your Lordship
“ in conversation — was not a new thought,” proceeds our author, “ started by accident or
“ occasion:” the different meaning of these two words may not, at first, occur. They have, however, a distinct meaning, and are properly used: for it is one very laudable property of our author’s style, that it is seldom encumbered with superfluous, synonymous words. *Started by accident*, is, fortuitously, or at random; *started by occasion*, is, by some incident, which at that time gave birth to it. His meaning is, that it was not a new thought which either casually sprung up in his mind, or was suggested to him, for the first time, by the train of the discourse: but, as he adds, *was the result of long reflection*. — He proceeds:

“ They all agreed, that nothing would be of
“ greater use towards the improvement of know-
“ ledge and politeness, than some effectual method,
“ for correcting, enlarging, and ascertaining our
“ language, and they think it a work very pos-
“ sible to be compassed under the protection of
“ a prince, the countenance and encouragement
“ of a ministry, and the care of proper persons
“ chosen for such an undertaking.

This is an excellent sentence; clear, and elegant. The words are all simple, well chosen, and expressive; and are arranged in the most proper order. It is a harmonious period too, which is a beauty not frequent in our author. The last part of it consists of three members, which gradually rise and swell above one another, without any affected or unsuitable pomp; — “under the
“ protection of a prince, the countenance and
“ encouragement of a ministry, and the care of
“ proper persons chosen for such an undertaking.” We may remark, in the beginning of the sentence, the proper use of the preposition *towards* — “greater use towards the improvement of
“ knowledge and politeness” — importing the pointing or tendency of any thing to a certain end; which could not have been so well expressed by the preposition *for*, commonly employed in place of *towards*, by authors who are less attentive, than Dean Swift was, to the force of words.

One fault might, perhaps, be found, both with this and the former sentence, considered as

introductory ones. We expect, that an introduction is to unfold, clearly and directly, the subject that is to be treated of. In the first sentence, our author had told us, of a thought he mentioned to his Lordship, in conversation, which had been the result of long reflection, and concerning which he had consulted judicious persons. But what that thought was, we are never told directly. We gather it indeed from the second sentence, wherein he informs us, in what these judicious persons agreed; namely, that some method for improving the language was both useful and practicable. But this indirect method of opening the subject, would have been very faulty in a regular treatise; though the ease of the epistolary form, which our author here assumes in addressing his patron, may excuse it in the present case.

“ I was glad to find your Lordship’s answer in
“ so different a style from what hath commonly
“ been made use of, on the like occasions, for
“ some years past; *that all such thoughts must be*
“ *deferred to a time of peace*; a topic which some
“ have carried so far, that they would not have
“ us, by any means, think of preserving our
“ civil and religious constitution, because we are
“ engaged in a war abroad.”

This sentence also is clear and elegant; only there is one inaccuracy, when he speaks of his Lordship’s *answer* being in so different a style from what had formerly been used. His *answer* to what? or to whom? for from any thing

going before, it does not appear that any application or address had been made to his Lordship by those persons, whose opinion was mentioned in the preceding sentence; and to whom the answer, here spoken of, naturally refers. There is a little indistinctness, as I before observed, in our author's manner of introducing his subject here. — We may observe too, that the phrase — “glad to find your answer in so different a style” — though abundantly suited to the language of conversation, or of a familiar letter, yet, in regular composition, requires an additional word — “glad to find your answer run in so different a style.”

“It will be among the distinguishing marks of your ministry, my Lord, that you have a genius above all such regards, and that no reasonable proposal, for the honor, the advantage, or ornament of your country, however foreign to your immediate office, was ever neglected by you.”

The phrase — “a genius above all such regards” both seems somewhat harsh, and does not clearly express what the author means, namely, the *confined views* of those who neglected every thing that belonged to the arts of peace in the time of war. — Bating this expression, there is nothing that can be subject to the least reprehension in this sentence, nor in all that follows, to the end of the paragraph.

“I confess, the merit of this candor and confession is very much lessened, because your

“ Lordship hardly leaves us room to offer our
“ good wishes; removing all our difficulties,
“ and supplying our wants, faster than the most
“ visionary projector can adjust his schemes. And
“ therefore, my Lord, the design of this paper
“ is not so much to offer you ways and means,
“ as to complain of a grievance, the redressing
“ of which is to be your own work, as much
“ as that of paying the nation’s debts, or opening
“ a trade into the South sea; and, though not
“ of such immediate benefit as either of these,
“ or any other of your glorious actions, yet,
“ perhaps, in future ages not less to your honor.”

The compliments which the Dean here pays to his patron, are very high and strained; and show, that, with all his furliness, he was as capable, on some occasions, of making his court to a great man by flattery, as other writers. However, with respect to the style, which is the sole object of our present consideration, every thing here, as far as appears to me, is faultless. In these sentences, and, indeed, throughout this paragraph, in general, which we have now ended, our author’s style appears to great advantage. We see that ease and simplicity, that correctness and distinctness, which particularly characterize it. It is very remarkable, how few Latinized words Dean Swift employs. No writer, in our language, is so purely English as he is, or borrows so little assistance from words of foreign derivation. From none can we

take a better model of the choice and proper significancy of words. It is remarkable, in the sentences, we have now before us, how plain all the expressions are, and yet, at the same time, how significant; and, in the midst of that high strain of compliment into which he rises, how little there is of pomp, or glare of expression. How very few writers can preserve this manly temperance of style; or would think a compliment of this nature supported with sufficient dignity, unless they had embellished it with some of those high sounding words, whose chief effect is no other than to give their language a stiff and forced appearance?

“ My Lord, I do here, in the name of all
“ the learned and polite persons of the nation,
“ complain to your Lordship, as First Minister,
“ that our language is extremely imperfect; that
“ its daily improvements are by no means in
“ proportion to its daily corruptions; that the
“ pretenders to polish and refine it, have chiefly
“ multiplied abuses and absurdities; and that,
“ in many instances, it offends against every part
“ of grammar.”

The turn of this sentence is extremely elegant. He had spoken before of a grievance for which he sought redress, and he carries on the allusion, by entering, here, directly on his subject, in the style of a public representation presented to the minister of state. One imperfection, however, there is in this sentence, which, luckily for our purpose, serves to illustrate a rule before given,

concerning the position of adverbs, so as to avoid ambiguity. It is in the middle of the sentence; — “that the pretenders to polish and refine it, have chiefly multiplied abuses and absurdities.” — Now, concerning the import of this adverb, *chiefly*, I ask, whether it signifies that these pretenders to polish the language, have been the *chief persons* who have multiplied its abuses, in distinction from others; or, that the *chief thing* which these pretenders have done, is to multiply the abuses of our language, in opposition to their “doing any thing to refine it?” These two meanings are really different; and yet, by the position which the word *chiefly* has in the sentence, we are left at a loss in which to understand it. The construction would lead us rather to the latter sense; that the chief thing which these pretenders have done, is to multiply the abuses of our language. But it is more than probable, that the former sense was what the Dean intended, as it carries more of his usual satirical edge, “that the pretended refiners of our language were, in fact, its chief corrupters;” on which supposition, his words ought to have run thus: “that the pretenders to polish and refine it, have been the chief persons to multiply its abuses and absurdities;” which would have rendered the sense perfectly clear.

Perhaps, too, there might be ground for observing farther upon this sentence, that as language is the object with which it sets out; “that

“ our language is extremely imperfect ;” and then follows an enumeration, concerning language in three particulars, it had been better if language had been kept the ruling word, or the nominative to every verb, without changing the scene; by making *pretenders* the ruling word, as is done in the second member of the enumeration, and then, in the third, returning again to the former word, “ language — that the pretenders “ to polish — and that, in many instances, it “ offends” — I am persuaded, that the structure of the sentence would have been more neat and happy, and its unity more complete, if the members of it had been arranged thus: “ That our “ language is extremely imperfect ; that its daily “ improvements are by no means in proportion “ to its daily corruptions; that, in many instances, it offends against every part of grammar; “ and that the pretenders to polish and refine it, “ have been the chief persons to multiply its abuses and absurdities.”—This degree of attention seemed proper to be bestowed on such a sentence as this, in order to show how it might have been conducted after the most perfect manner. Our author, after having said,

“ Lest your Lordship should think my censure too severe, I shall take leave to be more “ particular,” proceeds in the following paragraph :

“ I believe your Lordship will agree with me, “ in the reason why our language is less refined “ than those of Italy, Spain, or France.”

I am sorry to say, that now we shall have less to commend in our author. For the whole of this paragraph, on which we are entering, is, in truth, perplexed and inaccurate. Even, in this short sentence, we may discern an inaccuracy — “ why our language is less refined than those of Italy, Spain, and France;” putting the pronoun *those* in the plural, when the antecedent substantive to which it refers is in the singular, *our language*. Instances of this kind may sometimes be found in English authors; but they sound harsh to the ear, and are certainly contrary to the purity of grammar. By a very little attention, this inaccuracy could have been remedied; and the sentence have been made to run much better in this way; “ why our language is less refined than the Italian, Spanish, or French.”

“ It is plain, that the Latin tongue, in its purity, was never in this island; towards the conquest of which, few or no attempts were made till the time of Claudius; neither was that language ever so vulgar in Britain, as it is known to have been in Gaul and Spain.”

To say, that “ the Latin tongue, in its purity was never in this island,” is very careless style; it ought to have been, “ was never spoken in this island.” In the progress of the sentence, he means to give a reason why the Latin was never spoken in its purity amongst us, because our island was not conquered by the Romans till after the purity of their tongue began to

decline. But this reason ought to have been brought out more clearly. This might easily have been done, and the relation of the several parts of the sentence to each other much better pointed out by means of a small variation; thus: “It is plain, that the Latin tongue, in its
“purity, was never spoken in this island, as few
“or no attempts towards the conquest of it were
“made till the time of Claudius.” He adds:
“Neither was the language ever so vulgar in
“Britain. —” *Vulgar* was one of the worst words he could have chosen for expressing what he means here; namely, that the Latin tongue was at no time so *general*, or so much in *common use*, in Britain, as it is known to have been in Gaul and Spain.—*Vulgar*, when applied to language, commonly signifies impure, or debased language, such as is spoken by the low people, which is quite opposite to the author’s sense here: for, in place of meaning to say, that the Latin spoken in Britain was not so debased, as what was spoken in Gaul and Spain; he means just the contrary, and had been telling us, that we never were acquainted with the Latin at all, till its purity began to be corrupted.

“Further, we find that the Roman legions
“here were at length all recalled to help their
“country against the Goths, and other barbarous
“invaders.

The chief scope of this sentence is, to give a reason why the Latin tongue did not strike any

deep root in this island, on account of the short continuance of the Romans in it. He goes on :

“ Meantime the Britons, left to shift for themselves, and daily harassed by cruel inroads from the Picts, were forced to call in the Saxons for their defence ; who, consequently, reduced the greatest part of the island to their own power, drove the Britons into the most remote and mountainous parts, and the rest of the country in customs, religion, and language, became wholly Saxon.”

This is a very exceptionable sentence. First, the phrase *left to shift for themselves*, is rather a low phrase, and too much in the familiar style to be proper in a grave treatise. Next, as the sentence advances — “ forced to call in the Saxons for their defence, who, consequently, reduced the greatest part of the island to their own power.” — What is the meaning of *consequently* here? if it means “ afterwards,” or “ in progress of time,” this, certainly, is not a sense in which *consequently* is often taken; and therefore the expression is chargeable with obscurity. The adverb, *consequently*, in its most common acceptation, denotes one thing following from another, as an effect from a cause. If he uses it in this sense, and means that the Britons being subdued by the Saxons, was a necessary consequence of their having called in the Saxons to their assistance, this consequence is drawn too abruptly, and needed more explanation. For though it has often happened, that

nations have been subdued by their own auxiliaries, yet this is not a consequence of such a nature that it can be assumed, as seems here to be done, for a first and self-evident principle. — But further, what shall we say to this phrase, “reduced the greatest part of the island to their own power?” we say “reduce to rule, reduce to practice—we can say, that” one nation reduces another to subjection”—But when *dominion* or *power* is used, we always, as far as I know, say, “reduce under their power.” “Reduce to their power, is so harsh and uncommon an expression, that, though Dean Swift’s authority in language be very great, yet, in the use of this phrase, I am of opinion, that it would not be safe to follow his example.

Besides these particular inaccuracies, this sentence is chargeable with want of unity in the composition of the whole. The persons and the scene are too often changed upon us.—First, the Britons are mentioned, who are harassed by inroads from the Picts; next, the Saxons appear, who subdue the greatest part of the island, and drive the Britons into the mountains; and, lastly, the rest of the country is introduced, and a description given of the change made upon it. All this forms a groupe of various objects, presented in such quick succession, that the mind finds it difficult to comprehend them under one view. Accordingly, it is quoted in the *Elements of Criticism*, as an instance of a sentence rendered faulty by the breach of unity.

“ This I take to be the reason why there are
“ more Latin words remaining in the British than
“ the old Saxon; which, excepting some few
“ variations in the orthography, is the same in
“ most original words with our present English,
“ as well as with the German and other northern
“ dialects.”

This sentence is faulty, somewhat in the same manner with the last. It is loose in the connexion of its parts; and, besides this, it is also too loosely connected with the preceding sentence. What he had there said, concerning the Saxons expelling the Britons, and changing the customs, the religion, and the language of the country, is a clear and good reason for our present language being Saxon rather than British. This is the inference which we would naturally expect him to draw from the premises just before laid down: But when he tells us that, “ this is the reason why there
“ are more Latin words remaining in the British tongue than in the old Saxon,” we are presently at a stand. No reason for this inference appears. If it can be gathered at all from the foregoing deduction, it is gathered only imperfectly. For, as he had told us, that the Britons had *some* connexion with the Romans, he should have also told us, in order to make out his inference, that the Saxons never had *any*. The truth is, the whole of this paragraph concerning the influence of the Latin tongue upon ours, is careless, perplexed, and obscure. His argument required to have been
more

more fully unfolded, in order to make it be distinctly apprehended, and to give it its due force. In the next paragraph, he proceeds to discourse concerning the influence of the French tongue upon our language. The style becomes more clear, though not remarkable for great beauty or elegance.

“ Edward the Confessor having lived long in
 “ France, appears to be the first who introduced
 “ any mixture of the French tongue with the
 “ Saxon; the court affecting what the Prince
 “ was fond of, and others taking it up for a
 “ fashion, as it is now with us. William the
 “ Conqueror proceeded much further, bringing
 “ over with him vast numbers of that nation,
 “ scattering them in every monastery, giving
 “ them great quantities of land, directing all
 “ pleadings to be in that language, and endea-
 “ vouring to make it universal in the kingdom.”

On these two sentences, I have nothing of moment to observe. The sense is brought out clearly, and in simple, unaffected language.

“ This, at least, is the opinion generally
 “ received; but your Lordship hath fully con-
 “ vinced me, that the French tongue made yet
 “ a greater progress here under Harry the Second,
 “ who had large territories on that continent
 “ both from his father and his wife; made fre-
 “ quent journeys and expeditions thither; and
 “ was always attended with a number of his
 “ countrymen, retainers at court.”

In the beginning of this sentence, our author states an opposition between an opinion generally received, and that of his Lordship; and in compliment to his patron, he tells us, that his Lordship had convinced him of somewhat that differed from the general opinion. Thus one must naturally understand his words: "This, at least, is the opinion generally received; but your Lordship hath fully convinced me" — Now here there must be an inaccuracy of expression. For on examining what went before, there appears no sort of opposition betwixt the generally received opinion, and that of the author's patron. The general opinion was, that William the Conqueror had proceeded much farther than Edward the Confessor, in propagating the French language, and had endeavoured to make it universal. Lord Oxford's opinion was, that the French tongue had gone on to make a yet greater progress under Harry the Second, than it had done under his predecessor William: which two opinions are as entirely consistent with one another, as any can be; and therefore the opposition here affected to be stated between them by the adversative particle *but*, was improper and groundless.

"For some centuries after, there was a
"constant intercourse between France and Eng-
"land by the dominions we possessed there, and
"the conquests we made; so that our language,
"between two and three hundred years ago,
"seems to have had a greater mixture with

“ French than at present; many words having
“ been afterwards rejected, and some since the
“ days of Spenser; although we have still retained
“ not a few, which have been long antiquated
“ in France.”

This is a sentence too long and intricate, and liable to the same objection that was made to a former one, of the want of unity. It consists of four members, each divided from the subsequent by a semicolon. In going along, we naturally expect the sentence is to end at the second of these, or, at farthest, at the third; when, to our surprise, a new member pops out upon us, and fatigues our attention in joining all the parts together. Such a structure of a sentence is always the mark of careless writing. In the first member of the sentence, “ a constant intercourse
“ between France and England, by the domini-
“ ons we possessed there, and the conquests we
“ made,” the construction is not sufficiently filled up. In place of “ intercourse by the dominions
“ we possessed,” it should have been — “ by reason
“ of the dominions we possessed — or occasioned
“ by the dominions we possessed — ” and in place of “ the dominions we possessed there, and the
“ conquests we made,” the regular style is — “ the
“ dominions which we possessed there, and the
“ conquests which we made.” The relative pronoun *which*, is indeed in phrases of this kind sometimes omitted: But, when it is omitted, the style becomes elliptic; and though in conversation, or in the very light and easy kinds of

writing, such elliptic style may not be improper, yet in grave and regular writing, it is better to fill up the construction, and insert the relative pronoun. — After having said — “I could produce
“several instances of both kinds, if it were of
“any use or entertainment” — our author begins the next paragraph thus:

“To examine into the several circumstances
“by which the language of a country may be
“altered, would force me to enter into a wide
“field.”

There is nothing remarkable in this sentence, unless that here occurs the first instance of a metaphor since the beginning of this treatise, *entering into a wide field*, being put for beginning an extensive subject. Few writers deal less in figurative language than Swift. I before observed, that he appears to despise ornaments of this kind; and though this renders his style somewhat dry on serious subjects, yet his plainness and simplicity, I must not forbear to remind my readers, is far preferable to an ostentatious and affected parade of ornament.

“I shall only observe, that the Latin, the
“French, and the English, seem to have under-
“gone the same fortune. The first from the
“days of Romulus, to those of Julius Cæsar,
“suffered perpetual changes; and by what we
“meet in those authors who occasionally speak
“on that subject, as well as from certain frag-
“ments of old laws, it is manifest that the Latin,
“three hundred years before Tully, was as

“ unintelligible in his time, as the French and
“ English of the same period are now; and these
“ two have changed as much since William the
“ Conqueror (which is but little less than 700
“ years), as the Latin appears to have done in
“ the like term.”

The Dean plainly appears to be writing negligently here. This sentence is one of that involved and intricate kind, of which some instances have occurred before; but none worse than this. It requires a very distinct head to comprehend the whole meaning of the period at first reading. In one part of it we find extreme carelessness of expression. He says, “ it is manifest
“ that the Latin, 300 years before Tully, was
“ as unintelligible in his time, as the English
“ and French of the same period are now.” By the English and French *of the same period*, must naturally be understood, “ the English and French
“ that were spoken three hundred years before
“ Tully.” This is the only grammatical meaning his words will bear; and yet assuredly what he means, and what it would have been easy for him to have expressed with more precision, is,
“ the English and French that were spoken 300
“ years ago;” or at a period equally distant from our age, as the old Latin, which he had mentioned, was from the age of Tully. But when an author writes hastily, and does not review with proper care what he has written, many such inaccuracies will be apt to creep into his style.

“ Whether our language or the French will
“ decline as fast as the Roman did, is a question
“ that would perhaps admit more debate than it
“ is worth. There were many reasons for the
“ corruptions of the last; as the change of their
“ government to a tyranny, which ruined the
“ study of eloquence, there being no further use
“ or encouragement for popular orators; their
“ giving not only the freedom of the city, but
“ capacity for employments, to several towns in
“ Gaul, Spain, and Germany, and other distant
“ parts, as far as Asia, which brought a great
“ number of foreign pretenders to Rome, the
“ slavish disposition of the senate and people,
“ by which the wit and eloquence of the age
“ were wholly turned into panegyric, the most
“ barren of all subjects; the great corruption of
“ manners, and introduction of foreign luxury,
“ with foreign terms to express it, with several
“ others that might be assigned; not to mention
“ the invasion from the Goths and Vandals,
“ which are too obvious to insist on.

In the enumeration here made of the causes contributing towards the corruption of the Roman language, there are many inaccuracies—“ The change of their government to a tyranny—” of whose government? He had indeed been speaking of the Roman language, and therefore we guess at his meaning; but the style is ungrammatical; for he had not mentioned the Romans themselves; and therefore, when he says *their government*, there is no antecedent in

the sentence to which the pronoun, *their*, can refer with any propriety — “giving the capacity “for employments to several towns in Gaul,” is a questionable expression. For though towns are sometimes put for the people who inhabit them, yet to give a town *the capacity for employments*, sounds harsh and uncouth. — “The wit and eloquence of the age wholly turned into panegyric,” is a phrase which does not well express the meaning. Neither wit nor eloquence can be turned into panegyric; but they may be turned *towards panegyric*, or, *employed in panegyric*, which was the sense the author had in view.

The conclusion of the enumeration is visibly incorrect — “The great corruption of manners, “and introduction of foreign luxury, with “foreign terms to express it, with several others “that might be assigned—” He means, *with several other reasons*. The word *reasons*, had indeed been mentioned before; but as it stands at the distance of thirteen lines backward, the repetition of it here became indispensable, in order to avoid ambiguity. “Not to mention,” he adds, “the “invasions from the Goths and Vandals, which “are too obvious to insist on.” One would imagine him to mean, that the invasions from the Goths and Vandals, are *historical facts* too well known and obvious to be insisted on. But he means quite a different thing, though he has not taken the proper method of expressing it, through his haste, probably, to finish the paragraph; namely, that these invasions from the Goths

and Vandals “ were causes of the corruption of the Roman language too obvious “ to be insisted on.

I shall not pursue this criticism any further. I have been obliged to point out many inaccuracies in the passage which we have considered. But, in order that my observations may not be construed as meant to depreciate the style or the writings of Dean Swift below their just value, there are two remarks, which I judge it necessary to make before concluding this lecture. One is, That it were unfair to estimate an author's style on the whole, by some passage in his writings, which chances to be composed in a careless manner. This is the case with respect to this treatise, which has much the appearance of a hasty production; though, as I before observed, it was by no means on that account that I pitched upon it for the subject of this exercise. But after having examined it, I am sensible, that, in many other of his writings, the Dean is more accurate.

My other observation, which applies equally to Dean Swift and Mr. Addison, is, that there may be writers much freer of such inaccuracies, as I have had occasion to point out in these two, whose style, however, upon the whole, may not have half their merit. Refinement in language has, of late years, begun to be much attended to. In several modern productions of very small value, I should find it difficult to point

out many errors in language. The words might, probably, be all proper words, correctly and clearly arranged; and the turn of the sentence sonorous and musical; whilst yet the style, upon the whole, might deserve no praise. The fault often lies in what may be called the general cast, or complexion of the style; which a person of a good taste discerns to be vicious; to be feeble, for instance, and diffuse; flimsy or affected; petulant or ostentatious; though the faults cannot be so easily pointed out and particularized, as when they lie in some erroneous, or negligent construction of a sentence. Whereas, such writers as Addison and Swift, carry always those general characters of good style, which, in the midst of their occasional negligences, every person of good taste must discern and approve. We see their faults overbalanced by higher beauties. We see a writer of sense and reflection expressing his sentiments without affectation, attentive to thoughts as well as to words; and, in the main current of his language, elegant and beautiful; and, therefore, the only proper use to be made of the blemishes which occur in the writings of such authors, is to point out to those who apply themselves to the study of composition, some of the rules which they ought to observe for avoiding such errors; and to render them sensible of the necessity of strict attention to language and to style. Let them imitate the ease and simplicity of those great authors; let them study

to be always natural, and, as, far as they can, always correct in their expressions; let them endeavour to be, at some times, lively and striking; but carefully avoid being at any time ostentatious and affected.

LECTURE XXV.

Eloquence, or Public Speaking. — History of Eloquence.—Grecian Eloquence.—Demosthenes.

HAVING finished that part of the Course which relates to language and style, we are now to ascend a step higher, and to examine the subjects upon which style is employed. I begin with what is properly called eloquence, or public speaking. In treating of this, I am to consider the different kinds and subjects of public speaking; the manner suited to each; the proper distribution and management of all the parts of a discourse; and the proper pronunciation or delivery of it. But before entering on any of these heads, it may be proper to take a view of the nature of eloquence in general, and of the state in which it has subsisted in different ages and countries. This will lead into some detail; but I hope an useful one, as in every art it is of great consequence to have a just idea of the

perfection of the art, of the end at which it aims, and of the progress which it has made among mankind.

Of eloquence, in particular, it is the more necessary to ascertain the proper notion, because there is not any thing concerning which false notions have been more prevalent. Hence, it has been so often, and is still at this day, in disrepute with many. When you speak to a plain man of eloquence, or in praise of it, he is apt to hear you with very little attention. He conceives eloquence to signify a certain trick of speech; the art of varnishing weak arguments plausibly; or of speaking so as to please and tickle the ear. "Give me good sense," says he, "and keep your eloquence for boys." He is in the right, if eloquence were what he conceives it to be. It would be then a very contemptible art indeed, below the study of any wise or good man. But nothing can be more remote from truth. To be truly eloquent, is to speak to the purpose. For the best definition which, I think, can be given of eloquence, is, the art of speaking in such a manner as to attain the end for which we speak. Whenever a man speaks or writes, he is supposed, as a rational being, to have some end in view; either to inform, or to amuse, or to persuade, or, in some way or other, to act upon his fellow-creatures. He who speaks, or writes, in such a manner as to adapt all his words most effectually to that end, is the most eloquent man. Whatever then the subject

be, there is room for eloquence; in history, or even in philosophy, as well as in orations. The definition which I have given of eloquence, comprehends all the different kinds of it; whether calculated to instruct, to persuade, or to please. But, as the most important subject of discourse is action, or conduct, the power of eloquence chiefly appears when it is employed to influence conduct, and persuade to action. As it is principally, with reference to this end, that it becomes the object of art, eloquence may, under this view of it, be defined, the art of persuasion.

This being once established, certain consequences immediately follow, which point out the fundamental maxims of the art. It follows clearly, that, in order to persuade, the most essential requisites are, solid argument, clear method, a character of probity appearing in the speaker, joined with such graces of style and utterance, as shall draw our attention to what he says. Good sense is the foundation of all. No man can be truly eloquent without it; for fools can persuade none but fools. In order to persuade a man of sense, you must first convince him; which is only to be done, by satisfying his understanding of the reasonableness of what you propose to him.

This leads me to observe, that convincing and persuading, though they are sometimes confounded, import, notwithstanding, different things, which it is necessary for us, at present, to distinguish from each other. Conviction affects

the understanding only; persuasion, the will and the practice. It is the business of the philosopher to convince me of truth; it is the business of the orator to persuade me to act agreeably to it, by engaging my affections on its side. Conviction, and persuasion, do not always go together. They *ought*, indeed, to go together; and *would* do so, if our inclination regularly followed the dictates of our understanding. But as our nature is constituted, I may be convinced, that virtue, justice, or public spirit, are laudable, while, at the same time, I am not persuaded to act according to them. The inclination may revolt, though the understanding be satisfied: the passions may prevail against the judgment. Conviction is however, always one avenue to the inclination, or heart; and it is that which an orator must first bend his strength to gain: for no persuasion is likely to be stable, which is not founded on conviction. But, in order to persuade, the orator must go farther than merely producing conviction; he must consider man as a creature moved by different springs, and must act upon them all. He must address himself to the passions; he must paint to the fancy, and touch the heart; and, hence besides solid argument, and clear method, all the conciliating and interesting arts, both of composition and pronunciation, enter into the idea of eloquence.

An objection may, perhaps hence be formed against eloquence; as an Art which may be

employed for persuading to ill, as well as to good. There is no doubt that it may; and so reasoning may also be, and too often is employed, for leading men into error. But who would think of forming an argument from this against the cultivation of our reasoning powers? Reason, eloquence, and every art which ever has been studied among mankind, may be abused, and may prove dangerous in the hands of bad men; but it were perfectly childish to contend, that, upon this account, they ought to be abrogated. Give truth and virtue the same arms which you give vice and falsehood, and the former are likely to prevail. Eloquence is no invention of the schools. Nature teaches every man to be eloquent, when he is much in earnest. Place him in some critical situation; let him have some great interest at stake, and you will see him lay hold of the most effectual means of persuasion. The art of oratory proposes nothing more than to follow out that track which nature has first pointed out to men. And the more exactly that this track is pursued, the more that eloquence is properly studied, the more shall we be guarded against the abuse which bad men make of it, and enabled the better to distinguish between true eloquence and the tricks of sophistry.

We may distinguish three kinds, or degrees of eloquence. The first, and lowest, is that which aims only at pleasing the hearers. Such, generally, is the eloquence of panegyrics, inaugural orations, addresses to great men, and other

harangues of this sort. This ornamental sort of composition is not altogether to be rejected. It may innocently amuse and entertain the mind; and it may be mixed, at the same time, with very useful sentiments. But it must be confessed, that where the speaker has no farther aim than merely to shine and to please, there is great danger of art being strained into ostentation, and of the composition becoming tiresome and languid.

A second and a higher degree of eloquence is, when the speaker aims not merely to please, but also to inform, to instruct, to convince: when his art is exerted, in removing prejudices against himself and his cause, in chusing the most proper arguments, stating them with the greatest force, arranging them in the best order, expressing and delivering them with propriety and beauty; and thereby disposing us to pass that judgment, or embrace that side of the cause, to which he seeks to bring us. Within this compass chiefly, is employed the eloquence of the bar.

But there is a third, and still higher degree of eloquence, wherein a greater power is exerted over the human mind; by which we are not only convinced, but are interested, agitated, and carried along with the speaker; our passions are made to rise together with his; we enter into all his emotions; we love, we detest, we resent, according as he inspires us; and are prompted to resolve, or to act, with vigor and warmth.

Debate

Debate, in popular assemblies, opens the most illustrious field to this species of eloquence; and the pulpit, also, admits it.

I am here to observe, and the observation is of consequence, that the high eloquence which I have last mentioned, is always the offspring of passion. By passion, I mean that state of the mind in which it is agitated, and fired, by some object it has in view. A man may convince, and even persuade others to act, by mere reason and argument. But that degree of eloquence which gains the admiration of mankind, and properly denominates one an orator, is never found without warmth or passion. Passion, when in such a degree as to rouse and kindle the mind, without throwing it out of the possession of itself, is universally found to exalt all the human powers. It renders the mind infinitely more enlightened, more penetrating, more vigorous and masterly, than it is in its calm moments. A man, actuated by a strong passion, becomes much greater than he is at other times. He is conscious of more strength and force; he utters greater sentiments, conceives higher designs, and executes them with a boldness and a felicity, of which, on other occasions, he could not think himself capable. But chiefly, with respect to persuasion, is the power of passion felt. Almost every man, in passion, is eloquent. Then, he is at no loss for words and arguments. He transmits to others, by a sort of contagious sympathy, the warm sentiments which he feels; his looks and

gestures are all persuasive; and nature here shows herself infinitely more powerful than all art. This is the foundation of that just and noted rule: "Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum ipse tibi."

This principle being once admitted, that all high eloquence flows from passion, several consequences follow, which deserve to be attended to; and the mention of which will serve to confirm the principle itself. For hence, the universally acknowledged effect of enthusiasm, or warmth of any kind, in public speakers, for affecting their audience. Hence all labored declamation, and affected ornaments of style, which show the mind to be cool and unmoved, are so inconsistent with persuasive eloquence. Hence all studied prettinesses, in gesture or pronunciation, detract so greatly from the weight of a speaker. Hence a discourse that is read, moves us less than one that is spoken, as having less the appearance of coming warm from the heart. Hence, to call a man cold, is the same thing as to say, that he is not eloquent. Hence a sceptical man, who is always in suspense, and feels nothing strongly; or a cunning mercenary man, who is suspected rather to assume the appearance of passion than to feel it; have so little power over men in public speaking. Hence, in fine, the necessity of being, and being believed to be, disinterested, and in earnest, in order to persuade.

These are some of the capital ideas which have occurred to me, concerning eloquence in

general; and with which I have thought proper to begin, as the foundation of much of what I am afterwards to suggest. From what I have already said, it is evident that eloquence is a high talent, and of great importance in society; and that it requires both natural genius, and much improvement from art. Viewed as the art of persuasion, it requires, in its lowest state, soundness of understanding, and considerable acquaintance with human nature; and, in its higher degrees, it requires, moreover, strong sensibility of mind, a warm and lively imagination, joined with correctness of judgment, and an extensive command of the power of language; to which must also be added, the graces of pronunciation and delivery.—Let us next proceed, to consider in what state eloquence has subsisted in different ages and nations.

It is an observation made by several writers, that eloquence is to be looked for only in free states. Longinus, in particular, at the end of his treatise on the Sublime, when assigning the reason why so little sublimity of genius appeared in the age wherein he lived, illustrates this observation with a great deal of beauty. Liberty, he remarks, is the nurse of true genius; it animates the spirit, and invigorates the hopes of men; excites honorable emulation, and a desire of excelling in every art. All other qualifications, he says, you may find among those who are deprived of liberty; but never did a slave become an orator; he can only be a pompous flatterer.

Now, though this reasoning be, in the main true; it must, however, be understood with some limitations. For, under arbitrary governments, if they be of the civilized kind, and give encouragement to the arts, ornamental eloquence may flourish remarkably. Witness France at this day, where, ever, since the reign of Louis XIV. more of what may justly be called eloquence, within a certain sphere, is to be found, than, perhaps, in any other nation of Europe; though freedom be enjoyed by some of them in a much greater degree. Their sermons and orations pronounced on public occasions, are not only polite and elegant harangues, but several of them are uncommonly spirited, animated with bold figures, and rise to a degree of the sublime. Their eloquence, however, in general, must be confessed to be of the flowery, rather than the vigorous kind; calculated more to please and soothe, than to convince and persuade. High, manly and forcible eloquence is, indeed to be looked for only, or chiefly, in the regions of freedom. Under arbitrary governments, besides the general turn of softness and effeminacy which such governments may be justly supposed to give to the spirit of a nation, the art of speaking cannot be such an instrument of ambition, business, and power, as it is in more democratical states. It is confined within a narrower range; it can be exerted only in the pulpit, or at the bar; but is excluded from those great scenes of public business, where the spirits of men have the freest

play; where important affairs are transacted, and persuasion of course, is more seriously studied. Wherever man can acquire most power over man by means of reason and discourse, which certainly is under a free state of government, there we may naturally expect that true eloquence will be best understood, and carried to the greatest height.

Hence, in tracing the rise of oratory, we need not attempt to go far back into the early ages of the world, or search for it among the monuments of Eastern or Egyptian antiquity. In those ages, there was, indeed, an eloquence of a certain kind; but it approached nearer to poetry, than to what we properly call oratory. There is reason to believe, as I formerly showed, that the language of the first ages was passionate and metaphorical; owing partly to the scanty stock of words, of which speech then consisted; and partly to the tincture which language naturally takes from the savage and uncultivated state of men, agitated by unrestrained passions, and struck by events, which to them are strange and surprising. In this state, rapture and enthusiasm, the parents of poetry, had an ample field. But while the intercourse of men was as yet unfrequent, and force and strength were the chief means employed in deciding controversies, the arts of oratory and persuasion, of reasoning and debate, could be but little known. The first empires that arose, the Assyrian and Egyptian, were of the despotic kind. The whole power

was in the hands of one, or at most of a few. The multitude were accustomed to a blind reverence: they were led, not persuaded; and none of those refinements of society, which make public speaking an object of importance, were as yet introduced.

It is not till the rise of the Grecian republics, that we find any remarkable appearances of eloquence as the art of persuasion; and these gave it such a field as it never had before, and, perhaps, has never had again since that time. And, therefore, as the Grecian eloquence has ever been the object of admiration to those who have studied the powers of speech, it is necessary, that we fix our attention, for a little, on this period.

Greece was divided into a multitude of petty states. These were governed, at first, by kings who were called tyrants, and who being, in succession, expelled from all these states, there sprung up a great number of democratical governments, founded nearly on the same plan, animated by the same high spirit of freedom, mutually jealous, and rivals of each other. We may compute the flourishing period of those Grecian states, to have lasted from the battle of Marathon, till the time of Alexander the Great, who subdued the liberties of Greece; a period which comprehends about 150 years, and within which are to be found most of their celebrated poets and philosophers, but chiefly their orators: for though poetry and philosophy were not

extinct among them after that period, yet eloquence hardly made any figure.

Of these Grecian republics, the most noted, by far, for eloquence, and, indeed, for arts of every kind, was that of Athens. The Athenians were an ingenious, quick, sprightly people; practised in business, and sharpened by frequent and sudden revolutions, which happened in their government. The genius of their government was entirely democratical; their legislature consisted of the whole body of the people. They had, indeed, a senate of five hundred; but in the general convention of the citizens was placed the last resort; and affairs were conducted there, altogether, by reasoning, speaking, and a skilful application to the passions and interests of a popular assembly. There, laws were made, peace and war decreed, and thence the magistrates were chosen. For the highest honors of the state were alike open to all; nor was the meanest tradesman excluded from a seat in their supreme courts. In such a state, eloquence, it is obvious, would be much studied, as the surest means of rising to influence and power; and what sort of eloquence? Not that which was brilliant merely, and showy, but that which was found, upon trial, to be most effectual for convincing, interesting, and persuading the hearers. For there, public speaking was not a mere competition for empty applause, but a serious contention for that public leading, which was the great object

both of the men of ambition, and the men of virtue.

Among a nation so enlightened and acute, and where the highest attention was paid to every thing elegant in the arts, we may naturally expect to find the public taste refined and judicious. Accordingly, it was improved to such a degree, that the Attic taste and Attic manner have passed into a proverb. It is true, that ambitious demagogues, and corrupt orators, did sometimes dazzle and mislead the people, by a showy but false eloquence; for the Athenians, with all their acuteness, were factious and giddy, and great admirers of every novelty. But when some important interest drew their attention, when any great danger roused them, and put their judgment to a serious trial, they commonly distinguished, very justly, between genuine and spurious eloquence: and hence Demosthenes triumphed over all his opponents, because he spoke always to the purpose, affected no insignificant parade of words, used weighty arguments, and showed them clearly where their interest lay. In conjunctures of the state, when the public was alarmed with some pressing danger, when the people were assembled, and proclamation was made by the crier, for any one to rise and deliver his opinion upon the present situation of affairs, empty declamation and sophistical reasoning would not only have been hissed, but resented and punished by an assembly so intelligent and accustomed to business. Their

greatest orators trembled on such occasions, when they rose to address the people, as they knew they were to be held answerable for the issue of the counsel which they gave. The most liberal endowments of the greatest princes never could found such a school for true oratory, as was formed by the nature of the Athenian republic. Eloquence there sprung, native and vigorous, from amidst the contentions of faction and freedom, of public business, and of active life; and not from that retirement and speculation, which we are apt sometimes to fancy more favorable to eloquence than they are found to be.

Pyfistratus, who was cotemporary with Solon, and subverted his plan of government, is mentioned by Plutarch, as the first who distinguished himself among the Athenians by application to the arts of speech. His ability in these arts, he employed for raising himself to the sovereign power; which, however, when he had attained, he exercised with moderation. Of the orators who flourished between his time and the Peloponnesian war, no particular mention is made in history. Pericles, who died about the beginning of that war, was properly the first who carried eloquence to a great height; to such a height indeed, that it does not appear he was ever afterwards surpassed. He was more than an orator; he was also a statesman and a general; expert in business, and of consummate address. For forty years, he governed Athens with absolute sway; and historians ascribe his

influence, not more to his political talents than to his eloquence, which was of that forcible and vehement kind, that bore every thing before it, and triumphed over the passions and affections of the people. Hence he had the surname of Olympias given him: and it was said, that, like Jupiter, he thundered when he spoke. Though his ambition be liable to censure, yet great virtues certainly he had; and it was the confidence which the people reposed in his integrity, that gave such power to his eloquence; a circumstance, without which the influence of public speaking in a popular state can seldom go far. He appears to have been generous, magnanimous, and public spirited: he raised no fortune to himself; he expended indeed great sums of the public money, but chiefly on public works; and at his death is said to have valued himself principally on having never obliged any citizen to wear mourning on his account, during his long administration. It is a remarkable particular recorded of Pericles by Suidas, that he was the first Athenian who composed, and put into writing, a discourse designed for the public.

Posterior to Pericles, in the course of the Peloponnesian war, arose Cleon, Alcibiades, Critias, and Theramenes, eminent citizens of Athens, who were all distinguished for their eloquence. They were not orators by profession; they were not formed by schools, but by a much more powerful education, that of business and debate; where man sharpened man, and

civil affairs carried on by public speaking, called forth every exertion of the mind. The manner or style of oratory which then prevailed, we learn from the orations in the history of Thucydides, who also flourished in the same age. It was manly, vehement, and concise, even to some degree of obscurity. "Grandes erant verbis," says Cicero, "crebri sententiis, compressione rerum breves, & ob eam ipsam causam, interdum subobscuri *." A manner very different from what in modern times we would conceive to be the style of popular oratory; and which tends to give a high idea of the acuteness of those audiences to which they spoke.

The power of eloquence having, after the days of Pericles, become an object of greater consequence than ever, this gave birth to a set of men till then unknown, called rhetoricians, and sometimes sophists, who arose in multitudes during the Peloponnesian war; such as Protagoras, Prodicus, Thrasymus, and one who was more eminent than all the rest, Gorgias of Leontium. These sophists joined to their art of rhetoric a subtle logic, and were generally a sort of metaphysical sceptics. Gorgias, however, was a professed master of eloquence only. His reputation was prodigious. He was highly venerated

* "They were magnificent in their expressions; they abounded in thought; they compressed their matter into few words, and, by their brevity, were sometimes obscure."

in Leontium of Sicily, his native city; and money was coined with his name upon it. In the latter part of his life, he established himself at Athens, and lived till he had attained the age of 105 years. Hermogenes (de Ideis, l. ii. cap. 9.) has preserved a fragment of his, from which we see his style and manner. It is extremely quaint and artificial; full of antithesis and pointed expression; and shows how far the Grecian subtilty had already carried the study of language. These rhetoricians did not content themselves with delivering general instructions concerning eloquence to their pupils, and endeavouring to form their taste; but they professed the art of giving them receipts for making all sorts of orations; and of teaching them how to speak for, and against, every cause whatever. Upon this plan, they were the first who treated of common places, and the artificial invention of arguments and topics for every subject. In the hands of such men, we may easily believe that oratory would degenerate from the masculine strain it had hitherto held, and become a trifling and sophistical art: and we may justly deem them the first corrupters of true eloquence. To them, the great Socrates opposed himself. By a profound, but simple reasoning peculiar to himself, he exploded their sophistry; and endeavoured to recal men's attention from that abuse of reasoning and discourse which began to be in vogue, to natural language, and sound and useful thought.

In the same age, though somewhat later than the philosopher above-mentioned, flourished Isocrates, whose writings are still extant. He was a professed rhetorician, and by teaching eloquence, he acquired both a great fortune, and higher fame than any of his rivals in that profession. No contemptible orator he was. His orations are full of morality and good sentiments: they are flowing and smooth; but too destitute of vigor. He never engaged in public affairs, nor pleaded causes; and accordingly his orations are calculated only for the shade: "Pompæ", Cicero allows, "magis quam pugnæ aptior; ad voluptatem aurium accommodatus potius quam ad judiciorum certamen *." The style of Georgias of Leontium was formed into short sentences, composed generally of two members balanced against each other. The style of Isocrates, on the contrary, is swelling and full; and he is said to be the first who introduced the method of composing in regular periods, which had a studied music and harmonious cadence; a manner which he has carried to a vicious excess. What shall we think of an orator, who employed ten years in composing one discourse, still extant, entitled the Panegyric? How much frivolous care must have been bestowed on all the minute elegance of words and sentences? Dionysius of

* "More fitted for show than for debate; better calculated for the amusement of an audience, than for judicial contests."

Harlicarnassus has given us upon the orations of Isocrates, as also upon those of some other Greek orators, a full and regular treatise, which is, in my opinion, one of the most judicious pieces of ancient criticism extant, and very worthy of being consulted. He commends the splendor of Isocrates's style, and the morality of his sentiments; but severely censures his affectation, and the uniform regular cadence of all his sentences. He holds him to be a florid declaimer; not a natural persuasive speaker. Cicero, in his critical works, though he admits his failings, yet discovers a propensity to be very favorable to that "plena ac numerosa oratio," that swelling and musical style, which Isocrates introduced; and with the love of which, Cicero himself was, perhaps, somewhat infected. In one of his treatises (*Orat. ad M. Brut.*) he informs us that his friend Brutus and he differed in this particular, and that Brutus found fault with his partiality to Isocrates. The manner of Isocrates generally catches young people, when they begin to attend to composition; and it is very natural that it should do so. It gives them an idea of that regularity, cadence, and magnificence of style, which fills the ear: but when they come to write or speak for the world, they will find this ostentatious manner unfit, either for carrying on business, or commanding attention. It is said, that the high reputation of Isocrates prompted Aristotle, who was nearly his cotemporary, or lived but a little after him, to write his institutions

of rhetoric; which are indeed formed upon a plan of eloquence very different from that of Isocrates, and the rhetoricians of that time. He seems to have had it in view to direct the attention of orators much more towards convincing and affecting their hearers, than towards the musical cadence of periods.

Isæus and Lyfias, some of whose orations are preserved, belong also to this period. Lyfias was somewhat earlier than Isocrates, and is the model of that manner which the ancients call the “*tenuis vel subtilis*.” He has none of Isocrates’s pomp. He is every where pure and Attic in the highest degree; simple and unaffected; but wants force, and is sometimes frigid in his compositions *. Isæus is chiefly remarkable for

* In the judicious comparison, which Dionysius of Halicarnassus makes of the merits of Lyfias and Isocrates, he ascribes to Lyfias, as the distinguishing character of his manner, a certain grace or elegance arising from simplicity: “*πεφυκε γὰρ ἡ Λυσίας λέξις ἔχειν τὸ Χάριεν ἢ δ’ Ἰσοκράτης, ἐγλεται.*” “The style of Lyfias has gracefulness for its nature: that of Isocrates, seeks to have it.” In the art of narration, as distinct, probable, and persuasive, he holds Lyfias to be superior to all orators: at the same time, he admits that his composition is more adapted to private litigation than to great subjects. He convinces, but he does not elevate nor animate. The magnificence and splendor of Isocrates is more suited to great occasions. He is more agreeable than Lyfias; and, in dignity of sentiment, far excels him. With regard to the affectation which is visible in Isocrates’s manner, he concludes what he says of it with the following excellent observations, which should never be forgotten by any who aspire to be true orators.

“*Τῆς μὲντοι ἀγωγῆς τῶν περιόδων τὸ κηκλίον, καὶ τῶν σχηματισμῶν*

being the master of the great Demosthenes, in whom, it must be acknowledged, eloquence shone forth with higher splendor, than perhaps in any that ever bore the name of an orator, and whose manner and character, therefore, must deserve our particular attention.

I shall not spend any time upon the circumstances of Demosthenes's life; they are well known.

της λέξεως το μείρα ἰώδες, ἔκ ἐδοκιμαζόν· δηλεῦει γὰρ ἡ διανοία πολλὰς τῷ ῥυθμῷ της λέξεως, καὶ τὰ κομψὰ λειπεται το ἀληθινόν· κρατίζον τ' ἐπιτηδεύμα ἐν διαλεκτῷ πολιτικῇ, καὶ ἐναγωνίῳ, τὸ ὁμοιοτάτον τῷ κατὰ φύσιν. βλάττει δὲ ἡ φύσις τοῖς νοήμασιν ἐπεσθαι τὴν λέξιν, ἔκ τῃ λέξει τὰ νοήματα· συμβεβηὼς δὲ ὅτι περὶ πολέμου καὶ εἰρήνης λεγόντι καὶ ἰδιωτῇ τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς τρεχόντι κίνδυνον ἐν δίκαις, τὰ κομψὰ, καὶ θεατρικὰ, καὶ μαιρακίῳδὰ ταῦτα ἔκ οἶδα ἥντινα δύναται ἂν παρασχεῖν ὠφελειαν. μάλλον δ' οἶδα ὅτι καὶ βλάβης ἂν αἰτία γένοιτο· χαρριεντισμός γὰρ πας ἐν σπᾶδι, καὶ καλῶς γινόμενος, αἴρον πραγμὰ καὶ πολεμιώτατον ἔλεω." *Judic. de Isocrate, § 58.*

" His studied circumflexion of periods, and juvenile affectation
 " of the flowers of speech, I do not approve. The thought is
 " frequently made subservient to the music of the sentence; and
 " elegance is preferred to reason. Whereas, in every discourse,
 " where business and affairs are concerned, nature ought to be
 " followed: and nature certainly dictates that the expression
 " should be an object subordinate to the sense, not the sense to
 " the expression. When one rises to give public counsel concern-
 " ing war and peace, or takes the charge of a private man, who
 " is standing at the bar to be tried for his life, those studied
 " decorations, those theatrical graces and juvenile flowers, are
 " out of place. Instead of being of service, they are detrimental
 " to the cause we espouse. When the contest is of a serious
 " kind, ornaments, which at another time would have beauty,
 " then lose their effect, and prove hostile to the affections which
 " we wish to raise in our hearers."

known. The strong ambition which he discovered to excel in the art of speaking; the unsuccessfulness of his first attempts; his unwearied perseverance in surmounting all the disadvantages that arose from his person and address; his shutting himself up in a cave, that he might study with less distraction; his declaiming by the sea-shore, that he might accustom himself to the noise of a tumultuous assembly, and with pebbles in his mouth, that he might correct a defect in his speech: his practising at home with a naked sword hanging over his shoulder, that he might check an ungraceful motion, to which he was subject; all those circumstances which we learn from Plutarch, are very encouraging to such as study eloquence, as they show how far art and application may avail, for acquiring an excellence which nature seemed unwilling to grant us.

Despising the affected and florid manner which the rhetoricians of that age followed, Demosthenes returned to the forcible and manly eloquence of Pericles; and strength and vehemence form the principal characteristics of his style. Never had orator a finer field than Demosthenes in his Olynthiacs and Philippics, which are his capital orations; and, no doubt, to the nobleness of the subject, and to that integrity and public spirit which eminently breathe in them, they are indebted for much of their merit. The subject, is to rouse the indignation of his countrymen against Philip of Macedon, the public enemy of the liberties of Greece; and to guard them

against the insidious measures, by which that crafty prince endeavoured to lay them asleep to danger. In the prosecution of this end, we see him taking every proper method to animate a people, renowned for justice, humanity, and valor, but in many instances become corrupt and degenerate. He boldly taxes them with their venality, their indolence, and indifference to the public cause; while, at the same time, with all the art of an orator, he recalls the glory of their ancestors to their thoughts, shows them that they are still a flourishing and a powerful people, the natural protectors of the liberty of Greece, and who wanted only the inclination to exert themselves, in order to make Philip tremble. With his cotemporary orators, who were in Philip's interest, and who persuaded the people to peace, he keeps no measures, but plainly reproaches them as the betrayers of their country. He not only prompts to vigorous conduct, but he lays down the plan of that conduct; he enters into particulars; and points out, with great exactness, the measures of execution. This is the strain of these orations. They are strongly animated; and full of the impetuosity and fire of public spirit. They proceed in a continued train of inductions, consequences, and demonstrations, founded on sound reason. The figures which he uses, are never sought after; but always rise from the subject. He employs them sparingly indeed; for splendor and ornament are not the distinctions of this orator's composition. It is an energy of

thought peculiar to himself, which forms his character, and sets him above all others. He appears to attend much more to things than to words. We forget the orator, and think of the business. He warms the mind, and impels to action. He has no parade and ostentation; no methods of insinuation; no labored introductions; but is like a man full of his subject, who, after preparing his audience by a sentence or two for hearing plain truths, enters directly on business.

Demosthenes appears to great advantage, when contrasted with Æschines in the celebrated oration "pro Corona." Æschines was his rival in business, and personal enemy; and one of the most distinguished orators of that age. But when we read the two orations, Æschines is feeble in comparison of Demosthenes, and makes much less impression on the mind. His reasonings concerning the law that was in question, are indeed very subtle; but his invective against Demosthenes is general, and ill supported. Whereas Demosthenes is a torrent, that nothing can resist. He bears down his antagonist with violence; he draws his character in the strongest colors; and the particular merit of that oration is, that all the descriptions in it are highly picturesque. There runs through it a strain of magnanimity and high honor: the orator speaks with that strength and conscious dignity which great actions and public spirit alone inspire. Both orators use great liberties with one another; and in general, that unrestrained licence which ancient manners

permitted, even to the length of abusive names and downright scurrility, as appears both here and in Cicero's Philippics, hurts and offends a modern ear. What those ancient orators gained by such a manner in point of freedom and boldness, is more than compensated by want of dignity; which seems to give an advantage, in this respect, to the greater decency of modern speaking.

The style of Demosthenes is strong and concise, though sometimes, it must not be dissembled, harsh and abrupt. His words are very expressive; his arrangement is firm and manly; and though far from being unmusical, yet it seems difficult to find in him that studied, but concealed number, and rythmus, which some of the ancient critics are fond of attributing to him. Negligent of those lesser graces, one would rather conceive him to have aimed at that sublime which lies in sentiment. His action and pronunciation are recorded to have been uncommonly vehement and ardent; which, from the manner of his composition, we are naturally led to believe. The character which one forms of him, from reading his works, is of the austere, rather than the gentle kind. He is, on every occasion, grave, serious, passionate; takes every thing on a high tone; never lets himself down, nor attempts any thing like pleasantry. If any fault can be found in his admirable eloquence, it is that he sometimes borders on the hard and dry. He may be thought to want smoothness and grace; which Dionysius of Halicarnassus attributes to his imitating too closely the manner

of Thucydides, who was his great model for style, and whose history he is said to have written eight times over with his own hand. But these defects are far more than compensated, by that admirable and masterly force of masculine eloquence, which, as it overpowered all who heard it, cannot, at this day, be read without emotion.

After the days of Demosthenes, Greece lost her liberty, eloquence of course languished, and relapsed again into the feeble manner introduced by the rhetoricians and sophists. Demetrius Phalereus, who lived in the next age to Demosthenes, attained indeed some character, but he is represented to us as a flowery, rather than a persuasive speaker, who aimed at grace rather than substance. "Delectabat Athenienses," says Cicero, "magis quam inflammabat." He amused the Athenians, rather than warmed them." And after his time, we hear of no more Grecian orators of any note.

LECTURE XXVI.

History of Eloquence continued. — Roman Eloquence. — Cicero. — Modern Eloquence.

HAVING treated of the rise of eloquence, and of its state among the Greeks, we now proceed to consider its progress among the Romans, where we shall find one model, at least, of eloquence, in its most splendid and illustrious form. The Romans were long a martial nation, altogether rude, and unskilled in arts of any kind. Arts were of late introduction among them; they were not known till after the conquest of Greece; and the Romans always acknowledged the Grecians as their masters in every part of learning.

Græcia capta ferum, victorem cepit, & artes
Intulit agresti Latio *.

HOR. Epist. ad Aug.

* When conquered Greece brought in her captive arts,
She triumph'd o'er her savage conquerors' hearts;
Taught our rough verse its numbers to refine,
And our rude style with elegance to shine.

FRANCIS.

As the Romans derived their eloquence, poetry, and learning from the Greeks, so they must be confessed to be far inferior to them in genius for all these accomplishments. They were a more grave and magnificent, but a less acute and sprightly people. They had neither the vivacity nor the sensibility of the Greeks; their passions were not so easily moved, nor their conceptions so lively; in comparison of them, they were a phlegmatic nation. Their language resembled their character: it was regular, firm, and stately; but wanted that simple and expressive naïveté, and, in particular, that flexibility to suit every different mode and species of composition, for which the Greek tongue is distinguished above that of every other country.

Graius ingenium, Graius dedit ore rotundo

Musa loqui * —

ARS POET.

And hence, when we compare together the various rival productions of Greece and Rome, we shall always find this distinction obtain, that in the Greek productions there is more native genius; in the Roman, more regularity and art. What the Greeks invented, the Romans polished;

* To her lov'd Greeks the Muse indulgent gave,
To her lov'd Greeks with greatness to conceive;
And in sublimer tone their language raise:
Her Greeks were only covetous of praise.

FRANCIS.

the one was the original, rough sometimes, and incorrect; the other, a finished copy.

As the Roman government, during the republic, was of the popular kind, there is no doubt but that, in the hands of the leading men, public speaking became early an engine of government, and was employed for gaining distinction and power. But in the rude unpolished times of the state, their speaking was hardly of that sort that could be called eloquence. Though Cicero, in his treatise "*de Claris Oratoribus*," endeavours to give some reputation to the elder Cato, and those who were his contemporaries, yet he acknowledges it to have been "*asperum & horridum*" "*genus dicendi*," a rude and harsh strain of speech. It was not till a short time preceding Cicero's age that the Roman orators rose into any note. Crassus and Antonius, two of the speakers in the dialogue *De Oratore*, appear to have been the most eminent, whose different manners Cicero describes with great beauty in that dialogue, and in his other rhetorical works. But as none of their productions are extant, nor any of Hortensius's, who was Cicero's contemporary and rival at the bar, it is needless to transcribe from Cicero's writings the account which he gives of those great men, and of the character of their eloquence *.

* Such as are desirous of particular information on this head, had better have recourse to the original, by reading Cicero's three books *De Oratore*, and his other two treatises, entitled,

The object in this period, most worthy to draw our attention, is Cicero himself; whose name alone suggests every thing that is splendid in oratory. With the history of his life, and with his character, as a man and a politician, we have not at present any direct concern. We consider him only as an eloquent speaker; and, in this view, it is our business to remark both his virtues, and his defects, if he has any. His virtues are, beyond controversy, eminently great. In all his orations there is high art. He begins, generally, with a regular exordium; and with much preparation and insinuation prepossesses the hearers, and studies to gain their affections. His method is clear, and his arguments are arranged with great propriety. His method is indeed more clear than that of Demosthenes; and this is one advantage which he has over him. We find every thing in its proper place; he never attempts to move, till he has endeavoured to convince; and in moving, especially the softer passions, he is very successful. No man, that ever wrote, knew the power and force of words better than Cicero. He rolls them along with the greatest beauty and pomp; and in the structure of his sentences, is curious and exact to the highest degree. He is always full and flowing, never abrupt. He is a

the one, Brutus, five de Claris Oratoribus; the other Orator, ad M. Brutum; which, on several accounts well deserve perusal.

great amplifier of every subject; magnificent, and in his sentiments highly moral. His manner is on the whole diffuse, yet it is often happily varied, and suited to the subject. In his four orations, for instance, against Catiline, the tone and style of each of them, particularly the first and last, is very different, and accommodated with a great deal of judgment to the occasion, and the situation in which they were spoken. When a great public object roused his mind, and demanded indignation and force, he departs considerably from that loose and declamatory manner to which he inclines at other times, and becomes exceedingly cogent and vehement. This is the case in his orations against Antony, and in those two against Verres and Catiline.

Together with those high qualities which Cicero possesses, he is not exempt from certain defects, of which it is necessary to take notice. For the Ciceronian eloquence is a pattern so dazzling by its beauties, that, if not examined with accuracy and judgment, it is apt to betray the unwary into a faulty imitation; and I am of opinion, that it has sometimes produced this effect. In most of his Orations, especially those composed in the earlier part of his life, there is too much art; even carried the length of ostentation. There is too visible a parade of eloquence. He seems often to aim at obtaining admiration, rather than at operating conviction, by what he says. Hence on some occasions, he is showy rather than solid;

and diffuse, where he ought to have been pressing. His sentences are, at all times, round and sonorous; they cannot be accused of monotony, for they possess variety of cadence; but, from too great a study of magnificence, he is sometimes deficient in strength. On all occasions, where there is the least room for it, he is full of himself. His great actions, and the real services which he had performed to his country, apologize for this in part; ancient manners, too, imposed fewer restraints from the side of decorum; but, even after these allowances made, Cicero's ostentation of himself cannot be wholly palliated; and his orations, indeed all his works, leave on our minds the impression of a good man, but withal, of a vain man.

The defects which we have now taken notice of in Cicero's eloquence, were not unobserved by his own cotemporaries. This we learn from Quinctilian, and from the author of the dialogue "*de Causis Corruptæ Eloquentiæ*." Brutus, we are informed, called him, "*fractum & elumbem*," broken and enervated. "*Suorum temporum homines*," says Quinctilian, "*incessare audebant eum ut tumidiorem & Asiaticum, & reduntantem, & in repetitionibus nimium, & in salibus aliquando frigidum, & in compositione fractum & exsultantem, & pene viro molliorem* *." These

* "*His cotemporaries ventured to reproach him as swelling, redundant and Asiatic; too frequent in repetitions; in his attempts towards wit sometimes cold; and, in the strain of his composition, feeble, desultory, and more effeminate than became a man.*"

cenfures were undoubtedly carried too far; and favour of malignity and personal enmity. They faw his defects, but they aggravated them; and the fource of thefe aggravations can be traced to the difference which prevailed in Rome, in Cicero's days, between two great parties, with refpect to eloquence. The "Attici," and the "Afiani." The former, who called themfelves the Attics, were the patrons of what they conceived to be the chafte, fimple, and natural ftyle of eloquence; from which they accused Cicero as having departed, and as leaning to the florid Afatic manner. In feveral of his rhetorical works, particularly in his "Orator ad Brutum," Cicero, in his turn, endeavours to expofe this feft, as fubftituting a frigid and jejune manner, in place of the true Attic eloquence; and contends, that his own compofition was formed upon the real Attic ftyle. In the 10th chapter of the laft book of Quinctilian's *Inftitutions*, a full account is given of the difputes between thefe two parties; and of the Rhodian, or middle manner between the Attics and the Afatics. Quinctilian himfelf declares on Cicero's fide; and, whether it be called Attic or Afatic, prefers the full, the copious, and the amplifying ftyle. He concludes with this very juft obfervation: "Plures funt eloquentiæ facies; fed ftultiffimum
" eft quærere, ad quam refturus fe fit orator; cum
" omnis fpecies, quæ modo refta eft, habeat
" ufum. — Utetur enim, ut res exiget, omnibus;
" nec pro caufa modo, fed pro partibus caufæ *."

* "Eloquence admits of many different forms, and nothing

On the subject of comparing Cicero and Demosthenes, much has been said by critical writers. The different manners of these two princes of eloquence, and the distinguishing characters of each, are so strongly marked in their writings, that the comparison is, in many respects, obvious and easy. The character of Demosthenes is vigor and austerity; that of Cicero is gentleness and insinuation. In the one, you find more manliness, in the other, more ornament. The one is more harsh, but more spirited and cogent; the other more agreeable, but withal, looser and weaker.

To account for this difference, without any prejudice to Cicero, it has been said, that we must look to the nature of their different auditories; that the refined Athenians followed with ease the concise and convincing eloquence of Demosthenes; but that a manner more popular, more flowery, and declamatory, was requisite in speaking to the Romans, a people less acute, and less acquainted with the arts of speech. But this is not satisfactory. For we must observe, that the Greek orator spoke much oftener before a mixed multitude, than the Roman. Almost

“ can be more foolish than to inquire, by which of them an
 “ orator is to regulate his composition; since every form,
 “ which is in itself just, has its own place and use. The
 “ orator, according as circumstances require, will employ
 “ them all; suiting them not only to the cause or subject
 “ of which he treats, but to the different parts of that
 “ subject.”

all the public business of Athens was transacted in popular assemblies. The common people were his hearers, and his judges. Whereas Cicero generally addressed himself to the "Patres Conscripti," or in criminal trials to the Prætor, and the select judges; and it cannot be imagined, that the persons of highest rank, and best education in Rome, required a more diffuse manner of pleading than the common citizens of Athens, in order to make them understand the cause, or relish the speaker. Perhaps we shall come nearer the truth, by observing, that to unite together all the qualities, without the least exception, that form a perfect orator, and to excel equally in each of those qualities, is not to be expected from the limited powers of human genius. The highest degree of strength is, I suspect, never found united with the highest degree of smoothness and ornament; equal attentions to both are incompatible; and the genius that carries ornament to its utmost length, is not of such a kind, as can excel as much in vigor. For there plainly lies the characteristic difference between these two celebrated orators.

It is a disadvantage to Demosthenes, that, besides his conciseness, which sometimes produces obscurity, the language, in which he writes, is less familiar to most of us than the Latin, and that we are less acquainted with the Greek antiquities than we are with the Roman. We read Cicero with more ease, and of course with more pleasure. Independent of this circumstance

too, he is no doubt, in himself, a more agreeable writer than the other. But notwithstanding this advantage, I am of opinion, that were the state in danger, or some great public interest at stake, which drew the serious attention of men, an oration in the spirit and strain of Demosthenes, would have more weight, and produce greater effects than one in the Ciceronian manner. Were Demosthenes's Philippics spoken in a British assembly, in a similar conjuncture of affairs, they would convince and persuade at this day. The rapid style, the vehement reasoning, the disdain, anger, boldness, freedom, which perpetually animate them, would render their success infallible over any modern assembly. I question whether the same can be said of Cicero's orations; whose eloquence, however beautiful, and however well suited to the Roman taste, yet borders oftener on declamation, and is more remote from the manner in which we now expect to hear real business and causes of importance treated*.

In comparing Demosthenes and Cicero, most of the French critics incline to give the preference to the latter. P. Rapin the Jesuit, in the parallels which he has drawn between some of the most eminent Greek and Roman writers,

* In this judgment, I concur with Mr. David Hume, in his Essay upon Eloquence. He gives it as his opinion, that, of all human productions, the orations of Demosthenes present to us the models which approach the nearest to perfection.

uniformly decides in favor of the Roman. For the preference which he gives to Cicero, he assigns, and lays stress on one reason of a pretty extraordinary nature; viz. that Demosthenes could not possibly have so complete an insight as Cicero into the manners and passions of men; Why? — Because he had not the advantage of perusing Aristotle's treatise of rhetoric, wherein, says our critic, he has fully laid open that mystery: and, to support this weighty argument he enters into a controversy with A. Gellius, in order to prove that Aristotle's Rhetoric was not published till after Demosthenes had spoken, at least, his most considerable orations. Nothing can be more childish. Such orators as Cicero and Demosthenes, derived their knowledge of the human passions, and their power of moving them, from higher sources than any treatise of rhetoric. One French critic has indeed departed from the common tract; and, after bestowing on Cicero those just praises to which the consent of so many ages shows him to be entitled, concludes however, with giving the palm to Demosthenes. This is Fenelon, the famous Archbishop of Cambray, and author of *Telemachus*; himself surely no enemy to all the graces and flowers of composition. It is in his *Reflections on Rhetoric and Poetry*, that he gives this judgment; a small tract, commonly published along with his dialogues on eloquence*. These

* As his expressions are remarkably happy and beautiful,
dialogues

dialogues and reflections are particularly worthy of perusal, as containing, I think, the justest ideas on the subject, that are to be met with in any modern critical writer.

The reign of eloquence, among the Romans, was very short. After the age of Cicero, it languished, or rather expired; and we have no reason to wonder at this being the case. For not only was liberty entirely extinguished, but arbitrary power felt in its heaviest and most oppressive weight: Providence having, in its

the passage here referred to deserves to be inserted. “ Je
 “ ne crains pas dire, que Démosthène me paraît supérieur
 “ à Cicéron. Je proteste que personne n’admire plus Cicé-
 “ ron que je fais. Il embellit tout ce qu’il touche. Il fait
 “ honneur à la parole. Il fait des mots ce qu’un autre n’en
 “ saurait faire. Il a, je ne sais combien de forces d’esprit. Il
 “ est même court, & véhément, toutes les fois qu’il veut
 “ l’être; contre Catiline, contre Verres, contre Antoine.
 “ Mais on remarque quelque parure dans son discours. L’art
 “ y est merveilleux; mais on l’entrevoit. L’orateur en pen-
 “ sant au salut de la république; ne s’oublie pas, & ne
 “ se laisse pas oublier. Démosthène paraît sortir de soi, &
 “ ne voir que la patrie. Il ne cherche point le beau; il le
 “ fait, sans y penser, il est au-dessus de l’admiration. Il se
 “ sert de la parole, comme un homme modeste de son habit,
 “ pour se couvrir. Il tonne; il foudroie. C’est un torrent qui
 “ entraîne tout. On ne peut le critiquer, parcequ’on est saisi.
 “ On pense aux choses qu’il dit, & non à ses paroles. On
 “ le perd de vue. On n’est occupé que de Philippe qui envahit
 “ tout. Je suis charmé de ces deux orateurs, mais j’avoue
 “ que je suis moins touché de l’art infini, & de la magnifique
 “ éloquence de Cicéron, que de la rapide simplicité de
 “ Démosthène.”

wrath, delivered over the Roman empire to a succession of some of the most execrable tyrants that ever disgraced, and scourged, the human race. Under their government, it was naturally to be expected that taste would be corrupted, and genius discouraged. Some of the ornamental arts, less intimately connected with liberty, continued, for a while to prevail; but for that masculine eloquence, which, had exercised itself in the senate, and in the public affairs, there was no longer any place. The change which was produced on eloquence, by the nature of the government, and the state of the public manners, is beautifully described in the dialogue de Causis corruptæ Eloquentiæ, which is attributed, by some, to Tacitus, by others, to Quinctilian. Luxury, effeminacy, and flattery, overwhelmed all. The forum, where so many great affairs had been transacted, was now become a desert. Private causes were still pleaded; but the public was no longer interested; nor any general attention drawn to what passed there: “Unus inter hæc, & alter, dicenti assistit;”
“& res velut in solitudine agitur. Oratori autem
“clamore plausuque opus est, & velut quodam
“theatro, qualia quotidie antiquis oratoribus
“contingebant; cum tot ac tam nobiles formæ
“coarctarent; cum clientelæ, & tribus, & muni-
“cipiorum legationes, periclitantibus assisterent;
“cum in plerisque judiciis crederet populus Ro-
“manus sua interesse quid judicaretur*.”

* “The courts of judicature are, at present, so unfrequented, that the orator seems to stand alone, and talk to

In the schools of the declaimers, the corruption of eloquence was completed. Imaginary and fantastic subjects, such as had no real life, or business, were made the themes of declamation; and all manner of false and affected ornaments were brought into vogue: "Pace vestra liceat
 "dixisse," says Petronius Arbiter, to the declaimers of his time, "primi omnem eloquentiam
 "perdidistis. Levibus enim ac inanibus fonis
 "ludibria quædam excitando, effecistis ut corpus
 "orationis enervaretur atque caderet. Et ideo
 "ego existimo adolescentulos in scholis stultissimos
 "fieri, qui nihil ex iis, quæ in usu habemus,
 "aut vident; sed piratas cum catenis in littore
 "stantes; & tyrannos edicta scribentes quibus
 "imperent filiis ut patrum suorum capita præci-
 "dant; sed responsa, in pestilentia data, ut vir-
 "gines tres aut plures immolentur; sed mellitos
 "verborum globulos, & omnia quasi papavere,
 "& sesamo sparsa. Qui inter hæc nutriuntur,
 "non magis sapere possunt, quam bene olere
 "qui in culina habitant *." In the hands of the

"bare walls. But eloquence rejoices in the bursts of loud
 "applause, and exults in a full audience; such as used to
 "press round the ancient orators, when the forum stood
 "crowded with nobles: when numerous retinues of clients,
 "when foreign ambassadors, when tribes, and whole cities
 "assisted at the debate; and when, in many trials, the
 "Roman people understood themselves to be concerned in
 "the event."

* "With your permission, I must be allowed to say,
 "that you have been the first destroyers of all true eloquence.

Greek rhetoricians, the manly and sensible eloquence of their first noted speakers degenerated, as I formerly showed, into subtlety and sophistry; in the hands of the Roman declaimers, it passed into the quaint and affected; into point and antithesis. This corrupt manner begins to appear in the writings of Seneca; and shows itself, also, in the famous panegyric of Pliny the younger on Trajan, which may be considered as the last effort of Roman oratory. Though the author was a man of genius, yet it is deficient in nature and ease. We see, throughout the whole, a perpetual attempt to depart from the ordinary way of thinking, and to support a forced elevation.

In the decline of the Roman empire, the introduction of Christianity' gave rise to a new

“ For, by those mock subjects, on which you employ your
“ empty and unmeaning compositions, you have enervated and
“ overthrown all that is manly and substantial in oratory. I
“ cannot but conclude, that the youth whom you educate,
“ must be totally perverted in your schools, by hearing and
“ seeing nothing which has any affinity to real life, or human
“ affairs; but stories of pirates standing on the shore, provided
“ with chains for loading their captives, and of tyrants issuing
“ their edicts, by which children are commanded to cut off
“ the heads of their parents; but responses given by oracles in
“ the time of pestilence, that several virgins must be sacrificed;
“ but glittering ornaments of phrase, and a style highly spiced,
“ if we may say so, with affected conceits. They who are
“ educated in the midst of such studies, can no more acquire a
“ good taste, than they can smell sweet who dwell perpetually in
“ a kitchen.”

species of eloquence, in the apologies, sermons, and pastoral writings of the fathers of the church. Among the Latin fathers, Lactantius and Minutius Felix, are the most remarkable for purity of style; and in a later age, the famous St. Augustine possesses a considerable share of sprightliness and strength. But none of the fathers afford any just models of eloquence. Their language, as soon as we descend to the third or fourth century, becomes harsh; and they are, in general, infected with the taste of that age, a love of swoln and strained thoughts, and of the play of words. Among the Greek fathers, the most distinguished, by far, for his oratorical merit, is St. Chrysostome. His language is pure; his style highly figured. He is copious, smooth, and sometimes pathetic. But he retains, at the same time, much of that character which has been always attributed to the Asiatic eloquence, diffuse and redundant to a great degree, and often overwrought and tumid. He may be read, however, with advantage, for the eloquence of the pulpit, as being freer of false ornaments than the Latin fathers.

As there is nothing more that occurs to me, deserving particular attention in the middle age, I pass now to the state of eloquence in modern times. Here, it must be confessed, that, in no European nation, public speaking has been considered as so great an object, or been cultivated with so much care, as in Greece or Rome. Its reputation has never been so high; its effects have never been so considerable; nor has that

high and sublime kind of it, which prevailed in those ancient states, been so much as aimed at: notwithstanding, too, that a new profession has been established, which gives peculiar advantages to oratory, and affords it the noblest field; I mean, that of the church. The genius of the world seems, in this respect, to have undergone some alteration. The two countries where we might expect to find most of the spirit of eloquence, are France and Great Britain: France, on account of the distinguished turn of the nation towards all the liberal arts, and of the encouragement which, for this century past, those arts have received from the public; Great Britain, on account both of the public capacity and genius, and of the free government which it enjoys. Yet, so it is, that, in neither of those countries, has the talent of public speaking risen near to the degree of its ancient splendor. While, in other productions of genius, both in prose and in poetry, they have contended for the prize with Greece and Rome; nay, in some compositions, may be thought to have surpassed them: the names of Demosthenes and Cicero, stand, at this day, unrivalled in fame; and it would be held presumptuous and absurd, to pretend to place any modern whatever on the same, or even on a nearly equal, rank.

It seems particularly surprising, that Great Britain should not have made a more conspicuous figure in eloquence than it has hitherto attained; when we consider the enlightened, and, at the

same time, the free and bold genius of the country, which seems not a little to favor oratory; and when we consider that, of all the polite nations, it alone possesses a popular government, or admits into the legislature, such numerous assemblies as can be supposed to lie under the dominion of eloquence*. Notwithstanding this advantage, it must be confessed, that, in most parts of eloquence, we are undoubtedly inferior, not only to the Greeks and Romans by many degrees, but also to the French. We have philosophers, eminent and conspicuous, perhaps, beyond any nation, in all the parts of science. We have both taste and erudition, in a high degree. We have historians, we have poets of the greatest name; but of orators, or public speakers, how little have we to boast? And where are the monuments of their genius to be found? in every period we have had some who made a figure, by managing the debates in parliament; but that figure was commonly owing to their wisdom, or their experience in business, more than to their talents for oratory; and unless in some few instances, wherein the power of oratory has appeared, indeed, with

* Mr. Hume, in his Essay on Eloquence, makes this observation, and illustrates it with his usual elegance. He, indeed, supposes, that no satisfactory reasons can be given to account for the inferiority of modern to ancient eloquence. In this, I differ from him, and shall endeavour, before the conclusion of this lecture, to point out some causes to which, I think, it may, in a great measure be ascribed, in the three great scenes of public speaking.

much lustre, the art of parliamentary speaking rather obtained to several a temporary applause, than conferred upon any a lasting renown. At the bar, though, questionless, we have many able pleaders, yet few or none of their pleadings have been thought worthy to be transmitted to posterity; nor have commanded attention, any longer than the cause which was the subject of them interested the public, while in France, the pleadings of Patru, in the former age, and those of Cochin and D'Aguesseau, in later times, are read with pleasure, and are often quoted as examples of eloquence by the French critics. In the same manner, in the pulpit, the British divines have distinguished themselves by the most accurate and rational compositions which, perhaps, any nation can boast of. Many printed sermons we have, full of good sense, and of sound divinity and morality; but the eloquence to be found in them, the power of persuasion, of interesting and engaging the heart, which is, or ought to be, the great object of the pulpit, is far from bearing a suitable proportion to the excellence of the matter. There are few arts, in my opinion, farther from perfection, than that of preaching is among us; the reasons of which, I shall afterwards have occasion to discuss; in proof of the fact, it is sufficient to observe, that an English sermon, instead of being a persuasive animated oration, seldom rises beyond the strain of correct and dry reasoning. Whereas, in the sermons of Bossuet, Massillon, Bourdaloue, and Fléchier, among

the French, we see a much higher species of eloquence aimed at, and in a great measure attained, than the British preachers have in view.

In general, the characteristical difference between the state of eloquence in France and in Great Britain is, that the French have adopted higher ideas both of pleasing and persuading by means of oratory, though, sometimes, in the execution they fail. In Great Britain, we have taken up eloquence on a lower key; but in our execution, as was naturally to be expected, have been more correct. In France, the style of their orators is ornamented with bolder figures: and their discourse carried on with more amplification, more warmth and elevation. The composition is often very beautiful; but sometimes, also, too diffuse, and deficient in that strength and cogency which renders eloquence powerful; a defect owing, perhaps, in part, to the genius of the people, which leads them to attend fully as much to ornament as to substance; and, in part, to the nature of their government, which, by excluding public speaking from having much influence on the conduct of public affairs, deprives eloquence of its best opportunity for acquiring nerves and strength. Hence the pulpit is the principal field which is left for their eloquence. The members, too, of the French academy give harangues at their admission, in which genius often appears; but laboring under the misfortune of having no subject to discourse upon, they run commonly

into flattery and panegyric, the most barren and insipid of all topics.

I observed before, that the Greeks and Romans aspired to a more sublime species of eloquence, than is aimed at by the moderns. Theirs was of the vehement and passionate kind, by which they endeavoured to inflame the minds of their hearers, and hurry their imaginations away: and, suitable to this vehemence of thought, was their vehemence of gesture and action; the "*supplicatio pedis*," the "*percussio frontis & femoris*," were, as we learn from Cicero's writings*, usual gestures among them at the bar; though now they would be reckoned extravagant any where, except upon the stage. Modern eloquence is much more cool and temperate; and in Great Britain especially, has confined itself almost wholly to the argumentative and rational. It is much of that species which the ancient critics called the "*tenuis*," or "*subtilis*;" which aims at convincing and instructing, rather than affecting the passions, and assumes a tone not much higher than common argument and discourse.

Several reasons may be given, why modern eloquence has been so limited, and humble in its efforts. In the first place, I am of opinion, that this change must, in part, be ascribed to that correct turn of thinking, which has been so much studied in modern times. It can hardly be doubted, that, in many efforts of mere genius,

* Vide, De Clar. Orator.

the ancient Greeks and Romans excelled us; but, on the other hand, that, in accuracy and closeness of reasoning on many subjects, we have some advantage over them, ought, I think, to be admitted also. In proportion as the world has advanced, philosophy has made greater progress. A certain strictness of good sense has, in this island particularly, been cultivated, and introduced into every subject. Hence we are more on our guard against the flowers of elocution; we are on the watch, we are jealous of being deceived by oratory. Our public speakers are obliged to be more reserved than the ancients, in their attempts to elevate the imagination, and warm the passions; and by the influence of prevailing taste, their own genius is sobered and chastened, perhaps, in too great a degree. It is likely too, I confess, that what we fondly ascribe to our correctness and good sense, is owing, in a great measure, to our phlegm and natural coldness. For the vivacity and sensibility of the Greeks and Romans, more especially of the former, seem to have been much greater than ours, and to have given them a higher relish of all the beauties of oratory.

Besides these national considerations, we must, in the next place, attend to peculiar circumstances in the three great scenes of public speaking, which have proved disadvantageous to the growth of eloquence among us. Though the parliament of Great Britain be the noblest field which Europe, at this day, affords to a public speaker, yet

eloquence has never been so powerful an instrument there, as it was in the popular assemblies of Greece and Rome. Under some former reigns, the high hand of arbitrary power bore a violent sway; and in later times, ministerial influence has generally prevailed. The power of speaking, though always considerable, yet has been often found too feeble to counterbalance either of these; and, of course, has not been studied with so much zeal and fervor, as where its effect on business was irresistible and certain.

At the bar, our disadvantage, in comparison of the ancients, is great. Among them, the judges were generally numerous; the laws were few and simple; the decision of causes was left in a great measure, to equity and the sense of mankind. Here was an ample field for what they termed judicial eloquence. But among the moderns, the case is quite altered. The system of law is become much more complicated. The knowledge of it is thereby rendered so laborious an attainment, as to be the chief object of a lawyer's education, and, in a manner, the study of his life. The art of speaking is but a secondary accomplishment, to which he can afford to devote much less of his time and labor. The bounds of eloquence besides, are now much circumscribed at the bar; and except, in a few cases, reduced to arguing from strict law, statute, or precedent; by which means knowledge, much more than oratory, is become the principal requisite.

With regard to the pulpit, it has certainly been a great disadvantage, that the practice of reading sermons, instead of repeating them from memory, has prevailed so universally in England. This may, indeed, have introduced accuracy; but it has done great prejudice to eloquence; for a discourse read, is far inferior to an oration spoken. It leads to a different sort of composition, as well as of delivery, and can never have an equal effect upon any audience. Another circumstance, too, has been unfortunate. The sectaries and fanatics, before the restoration, adopted a warm, zealous, and popular manner of preaching; and those who adhered to them, in aftertimes, continued to distinguish themselves by somewhat of the same manner. The odium of these sects drove the established church from that warmth which they were judged to have carried too far, into the opposite extreme of a studied coolness, and composure of manner. Hence, from the art of persuasion, which preaching ought always to be, it has passed, in England, into mere reasoning and instruction; which not only has brought down the eloquence of the pulpit to a lower tone than it might justly assume; but has produced this farther effect, that, by accustoming the public ear to such cool and dispassionate discourses, it has tended to fashion other kinds of public speaking upon the same model.

Thus I have given some view of the state of eloquence in modern times, and endeavoured to account for it. It has, as we have seen, fallen

below that splendor which it maintained in ancient ages; and from being sublime and vehement, has come down to be temperate and cool. Yet, still in that region which it occupies, it admits great scope; and to the defect of zeal and application, more than to the want of capacity and genius, we may ascribe its not having hitherto risen higher. It is a field where there is much honor yet to be reaped; it is an instrument which may be employed for purposes of the highest importance. The ancient models may still, with much advantage, be set before us for imitation; though, in that imitation, we must doubtless, have some regard to what modern taste and modern manners will bear; of which I shall afterwards have occasion to say more.

LECTURE XXVII.

Different Kinds of Public Speaking.—Eloquence of Popular Assemblies.—Extracts from Demosthenes.

AFTER the preliminary views which have been given of the nature of eloquence in general, and of the state in which it has subsisted in different ages and countries, I am now to enter on considering the different kinds of public speaking, the distinguishing characters of each, and the rules which relate to them. The ancients divided all orations into three kinds; the demonstrative, the deliberative, and the judicial. The scope of the demonstrative was to praise or to blame; that of the deliberative to advise or to dissuade; that of the judicial, to accuse or to defend. The chief subjects of demonstrative eloquence, were panegyrics, invectives, gratulatory and funeral orations. The deliberative was employed in matters of public concern, agitated in the senate or before the assemblies of the people. The judicial is

the same with the eloquence of the bar employed in addressing judges, who have power to absolve or condemn. This division runs through all the ancient treatises on rhetoric; and is followed by the moderns, who copy them. It is a division not inartificial; and comprehends most, or all of the matters which can be the subject of public discourse. It will, however, suit our purpose better, and be found, I imagine, more useful, to follow that division which the train of modern speaking naturally points out to us, taken from the three great scenes of eloquence, popular assemblies, the bar, and the pulpit; each of which has a distinct character that particularly suits it. This division coincides in part with the ancient one. The eloquence of the bar is precisely the same with what the ancients called the judicial. The eloquence of popular assemblies, though mostly of what they term the deliberative species, yet admits also of the demonstrative. The eloquence of the pulpit is altogether of a distinct nature, and cannot be properly reduced under any of the heads of the ancient rhetoricians.

To all the three, pulpit, bar, and popular assemblies, belong, in common, the rules concerning the conduct of a discourse in all its parts. Of those rules I purpose afterwards to treat at large. But before proceeding to them, I intend to show, first, what is peculiar to each of these three kinds of oratory, in their spirit, character, or manner. For every species of public speaking has a manner or character peculiarly suited to it;
of

of which it is highly material to have a just idea, in order to direct the application of general rules. The eloquence of a lawyer is fundamentally different from that of a divine, or a speaker in parliament: and to have a precise and proper idea of the distinguishing character which any kind of public speaking, requires, is the foundation of what is called a just taste in that kind of speaking.

Laying aside any question concerning the pre-eminence in point of rank, which is due to any one of the three kinds before mentioned, I shall begin with that which tends to throw most light upon the rest, viz. the eloquence of popular assemblies. The most august theatre for this kind of eloquence, to be found in any nation of Europe, is, beyond doubt, the parliament of Great Britain. In meetings too, of less dignity, it may display itself. Wherever there is a popular court, or wherever any number of men are assembled for debate or consultation, there, in different forms, this species of eloquence may take place.

Its object is, or ought always to be persuasion. There must be some end proposed; some point, most commonly of public utility or good, in favor of which we seek to determine the hearers. Now, in all attempts to persuade men, we must proceed upon this principle, that it is necessary to convince their understanding. Nothing can be more erroneous, than to imagine, that,

because speeches to popular assemblies admit more of a declamatory style than some other discourses, they therefore stand less in need of being supported by sound reasoning. When modelled upon this false idea, they may have the show, but never can produce the effect, of real eloquence. Even the show of eloquence which they make, will please only the trifling and superficial. For, with all tolerable judges, indeed almost with all men, mere declamation soon becomes insipid. Of whatever rank the hearers be, a speaker is never to presume, that by a frothy and ostentatious harangue, without solid sense and argument, he can either make impression on them, or acquire fame to himself. It is, at least, a dangerous experiment; for, where such an artifice succeeds once, it will fail ten times. Even the common people are better judges of argument and good sense, than we sometimes think them; and upon any question of business, a plain man, who speaks to the point without art, will generally prevail over the most artful speaker who deals in flowers and ornament, rather than in reasoning. Much more, when public speakers address themselves to any assembly where there are persons of education and improved understanding, they ought to be careful not to trifle with their hearers.

Let it be ever kept in view, that the foundation of all that can be called eloquence, is good sense, and solid thought. As popular as the orations of Demosthenes were, spoken to all the

citizens of Athens, every one who looks into them, must see how fraught they are with argument; and how important it appeared to him, to convince the understanding, in order to persuade, or to work on the principles of action. Hence their influence in his own time; hence their fame at this day. Such a pattern as this, public speakers ought to set before them for imitation, rather than follow the tract of those loose and frothy declaimers, who have brought discredit on eloquence. Let it be their first study, in addressing any popular assembly, to be previously masters of the business on which they are to speak, to be well provided with matter and argument; and to rest upon these the chief stress. This will always give to their discourse an air of manliness and strength, which is a powerful instrument of persuasion. Ornament, if they have genius for it, will follow of course; at any rate it demands only their secondary study: "*Cura sit verborum; sollicitudo rerum.*" — "To your expression be attentive, but about your matter be solicitous," is an advice of Quintilian, which cannot be too often recollected by all who study oratory.

In the next place, in order to be persuasive speakers in a popular assembly, it is, in my opinion, a capital rule, that we be ourselves persuaded of whatever we recommend to others. Never, when it can be avoided, ought we to espouse any side of the argument, but what we believe to be the true and the right one. Seldom

or never will a man be eloquent, but when he is in earnest, and uttering his own sentiments. They are only the “*veræ voces ab imo pectore*,” “the unassumed language of the heart or head”, that carry the force of conviction. In a former lecture, when entering on this subject, I observed that all high eloquence must be the offspring of passion, or warm emotion. It is this which makes every man persuasive; and gives a force to his genius, which it possesses at no other time. Under what disadvantage then is he placed, who, not feeling what he utters, must counterfeit a warmth to which he is a stranger?

I know, that young people, on purpose to train themselves to the art of speaking, imagine it useful to adopt that side of the question under debate, which, to themselves, appears the weakest, and to try what figure they can make upon it. But, I am afraid, this is not the most improving education for public speaking; and that it tends to form them to a habit of flimsy and trivial discourse. Such a liberty they should, at no time, allow themselves, unless in meetings where no real business is carried on, but where declamation and improvement in speech is the sole aim. Nor even in such meetings, would I recommend it as the most useful exercise. They will improve themselves to more advantage, and acquit themselves with more honor, by choosing always that side of the debate to which, in their own judgment, they are most inclined, and supporting it by what seems to themselves most

solid and persuasive. They will acquire the habit of reasoning closely, and expressing themselves with warmth and force, much more when they are adhering to their own sentiments, than when they are speaking in contradiction to them. In assemblies where any real business is carried on, whether that business be of much importance or not, it is always of dangerous consequence for young practitioners to make trial of this sort of play of speech. It may fix an imputation on their characters before they are aware; and what they intended merely as amusement, may be turned to the discredit, either of their principles or their understanding.

Debate, in popular courts, seldom allows the speaker that full and accurate preparation before hand, which the pulpit always, and the bar sometimes, admits. The arguments must be suited to the course which the debate takes; and as no man can exactly foresee this, one who trusts to a set speech, composed in his closet, will, on many occasions, be thrown out of the ground which he had taken. He will find it pre-occupied by others, or his reasonings superseded by some new turn of the business; and, if he ventures to use his prepared speech, it will be frequently at the hazard of making an awkward figure. There is a general prejudice with us, and not wholly an unjust one, against set speeches in public meetings. The only occasion, when they have any propriety, is, at the opening of a debate, when the speaker has

it in his power to chuse his field. But as the debate advances, and parties warm, discourses of this kind become more unsuitable. They want the native air; the appearance of being suggested by the business that is going on; study and ostentation are apt to be visible; and, of course, though applauded as elegant, they are seldom so persuasive as more free and unconstrained discourses.

This, however, does not by any means conclude against premeditation of what we are to say; the neglect of which, and the trusting wholly to extemporaneous efforts, will unavoidably produce the habit of speaking in a loose and undigested manner. But the premeditation which is of most advantage, in the case which we now consider, is of the subject or argument in general, rather than of nice composition on any particular branch of it. With regard to the matter, we cannot be too accurate in our preparation, so as to be fully masters of the business under consideration; but, with regard to words and expression, it is very possible so far to overdo, as to render our speech stiff and precise. Indeed, till once persons acquire that firmness, that presence of mind, and command of expression, in a public meeting, which nothing but habit and practice can bestow, it may be proper for a young speaker to commit to memory the whole of what he is to say. But, after some performances of this kind have given him boldness, he will find it the better method not to confine himself so strictly;

but only to write, beforehand, some sentences with which he intends to set out, in order to put himself fairly in the train; and, for the rest, to set down short notes of the topics, or principal thoughts upon which he is to insist, in their order, leaving the words to be suggested by the warmth of discourse. Such short notes of the substance of the discourse, will be found of considerable service, to those, especially, who are beginning to speak in public. They will accustom them to some degree of accuracy, which, if they speak frequently, they are in danger too soon of losing. They will even accustom them to think more closely on the subject in question; and will assist them greatly in arranging their thoughts with method and order.

This leads me next to observe, that in all kinds of public speaking, nothing is of greater consequence than a proper and clear method. I mean not that formal method of laying down heads and subdivisions, which is commonly practised in the pulpit; and which, in popular assemblies, unless the speaker be a man of great authority and character, and the subject of great importance, and the preparation too very accurate, is rather in hazard of disgusting the hearers: such an introduction presenting always the melancholy prospect of a long discourse. But though the method be not laid down in form, no discourse, of any length, should be without method; that is, every thing should be found in its proper place. Every one who speaks, will find it of

the greatest advantage to himself to have previously arranged his thoughts, and classed under proper heads, in his own mind, what he is to deliver. This will assist his memory, and carry him through his discourse, without that confusion to which one is every moment subject, who has fixed no distinct plan of what he is to say. And with respect to the hearers, order in discourse is absolutely necessary for making any proper impression. It adds both force and light to what is said. It makes them accompany the speaker easily and readily, as he goes along; and makes them feel the full effect of every argument which he employs. Few things, therefore, deserve more to be attended to than distinct arrangement: for eloquence, however great, can never produce entire conviction without it. Of the rules of method, and the proper distribution of the several parts of a discourse, I am hereafter to treat.

Let us now consider of the style and expression suited to the eloquence of popular assemblies. Beyond doubt, these give scope for the most animated manner of public speaking. The very aspect of a large assembly, engaged in some debate of moment, and attentive to the discourse of one man, is sufficient to inspire that man with such elevation and warmth, as both give rise to strong expressions, and gives them propriety. Passion easily rises in a great assembly, where the movements are communicated by mutual sympathy between the orator and the audience. Those bold figures, of which I treated

formerly as the native language of passion, then have their proper place. That ardor of speech, that vehemence and glow of sentiment, which arise from a mind animated and inspired by some great and public object, form the peculiar characteristics of popular eloquence, in its highest degree of perfection.

The liberty, however, which we are now giving of the strong and passionate manner to this kind of oratory, must be always understood with certain limitations and restraints, which, it will be necessary to point out distinctly, in order to guard against dangerous mistakes on this subject.

At first, the warmth which we express must be suited to the occasion and the subject: for nothing can be more preposterous, than an attempt to introduce great vehemence into a subject, which is either of slight importance, or which, by its nature, requires to be treated of calmly. A temperate tone of speech, is that for which there is most frequent occasion; and he who is, on every subject, passionate and vehement, will be considered as a blusterer, and meet with little regard.

In the second place, we must take care never to counterfeit warmth without feeling it. This always betrays persons into an unnatural manner, which exposes them to ridicule. For, as I have often suggested, to support the appearance, without the real feeling of passion, is one of the most difficult things in nature. The disguise can

almost never be so perfect, but it is discovered. The heart can only answer to the heart. The great rule here, as indeed in every other case, is, to follow nature; never to attempt a strain of eloquence which is not seconded by our own genius. One may be a speaker, both of much reputation and much influence, in the calm argumentative manner. To attain the pathetic, and the sublime of oratory, requires those strong sensibilities of mind, and that high power of expression, which are given to few.

In the third place, even when the subject justifies the vehement manner, and when genius prompts it; when warmth is felt, not counterfeited; we must, however, set a guard on ourselves, not to allow impetuosity to transport us too far. Without emotion in the speaker, eloquence, as was before observed, will never produce its highest effects; but, at the same time, if the speaker lose command of himself, he will soon lose command of his audience too. He must never kindle too soon: he must begin with moderation; and study to carry his hearers along with him, as he warms in the progress of his discourse. For, if he runs before in the course of passion, and leaves them behind; if they are not tuned, if we may speak so, unison to him, the discord will presently be felt, and be very grating. Let a speaker have never so good reason to be animated and fired by his subject, it is always expected of him, that the awe and regard due to his audience should lay a decent

restraint upon his warmth, and prevent it from carrying him beyond certain bounds. If, when most heated by the subject, he can be so far master of himself as to preserve close attention to argument, and even to some degree of correct expression, this self-command, this exertion of reason, in the midst of passion, has a wonderful effect both to please, and to persuade. It is indeed the master-piece, the highest attainment of eloquence; uniting the strength of reason, with the vehemence of passion; affording all the advantages of passion for the purpose of persuasion, without the confusion and disorder which are apt to accompany it.

In the fourth place, in the highest and most animated strain of popular speaking, we must always preserve regard to what the public ear will bear. This direction I give, in order to guard against an injudicious imitation of ancient orators, who, both in their pronunciation and gesture, and in their figures of expression, used a bolder manner than what the greater coolness of modern taste will readily suffer. This may perhaps, as I formerly observed, be a disadvantage to modern eloquence. It is no reason why we should be too severe in checking the impulse of genius, and continue always creeping on the ground; but it is a reason, however, why we should avoid carrying the tone of declamation to a height that would now be reckoned extravagant. Demosthenes, to justify the unsuccessful action of Cheronæa, calls up the manes of those

heroes who fell in the battles of Marathon and Platea, and swears by them, that their fellow citizens had done well, in their endeavours to support the same cause. Cicero, in his oration for Milo, implores and attests the Alban hills and groves, and makes a long address to them: and both passages, in these orators, have a fine effect*. But how few modern orators could venture on such apostrophes? and what a power of genius would it require to give such figures now their proper grace, or make them produce a due effect upon the hearers?

In the fifth and last place, in all kinds of public speaking, but especially in popular assemblies, it is a capital rule to attend to all the decorums of time, place, and character. No

* The passage in Cicero is very beautiful, and adorned with the highest coloring of his eloquence. "Non est hu-
 "mano consilio, ne mediocri quidem, iudices, deorum im-
 "mortalium cura, res illa perfecta. Religiones, mehercule,
 "ipsæ aræque cum illam belluam cadere viderunt, commovisse
 "se videntur, & jus in illo suum retinuisse. Vos enim
 "jam Albani tumuli, atque luci, vos inquam imploro atque
 "obtestor, vosque Albanorum obrutæ aræ, factorum populi
 "Romani sociæ & æquales, quas ille præceps amentia cæsis
 "prostratisque sanctissimis lucis, substructionum insanis mo-
 "libus oppresserat, vestræ tum aræ, vestræ religiones vigne-
 "runt, vestra vis valuit, quam ille omni scelere polluerat.
 "Tuque ex tuo edito monte Latiali, sancte Jupiter, cujus
 "ille lacus, nemora, finesque, sæpe omni nefario stupro,
 "scelere macularat, aliquando ad eum puniendum, oculos
 "aperuisti; vobis illæ, vobis vestro in conspectu, feræ, sed
 "justæ tamen, & debitæ pœnæ solutæ sunt."

warmth of eloquence can atone for the neglect of these. That vehemence, which is becoming in a person of character and authority, may be unsuitable to the modesty expected from a young speaker. That sportive and witty manner which may suit one subject and one assembly, is altogether out of place in a grave cause, and a solemn meeting. "Caput artis est," says Quinctilian, "decere." "The first principle of art, is, to observe decorum." No one should ever rise to speak in public, without forming to himself a just and strict idea of what suits his own age and character; what suits the subject, the hearers, the place, the occasion; and adjusting the whole train and manner of his speaking on this idea. All the ancients insist much on this. Consult the first chapter of the eleventh book of Quinctilian, which is employed wholly on this point, and is full of good sense. Cicero's admonitions in his *Orator ad Brutum*, I shall give in his own words, which should never be forgotten by any who speak in public. "Est eloquentiæ, " sicut reliquarum rerum, fundamentum, sapientia; ut enim in vita, sic in oratione nihil est " difficilius quam quod deceat videre; hujus " ignorance sapissime peccatur; non enim omnis fortuna, non omnis auctoritas, non omnis " ætas, nec vero locus, aut tempus, aut auditor " omnis, eodem aut verborum genere tractandus " est, aut sententiarum. Semperque in omni parte " orationis, ut vitæ, quid deceat considerandum; " quod & in re de qua agitur positum est, & in

“ personis & eorum qui dicunt, & eorum qui
“ audiunt *.” — So much for the considerations
that require to be attended to, with respect to
the vehemence and warmth which is allowed in
popular eloquence.

The current of style should in general be full,
free, and natural. Quaint and artificial expressions
are out of place here; and always derogate from
persuasion. It is a strong and manly style which
should chiefly be studied; and metaphorical lan-
guage, when properly introduced, produces
often a happy effect. When the metaphors are
warm, glowing, and descriptive, some inaccuracy
in them will be overlooked, which, in a written
composition, would be remarked and censured.
Amidst the torrent of declamation, the strength
of the figure makes impression; the inaccuracy
of it escapes.

With regard to the degree of conciseness or

* “ Good sense is the foundation of eloquence, as it is
“ of all other things that are valuable. It happens in ora-
“ tory exactly as it does in life, that frequently nothing is
“ more difficult than to discern what is proper and beco-
“ ming. In consequence of mistaking this, the grossest faults
“ are often committed. For to the different degrees of rank,
“ fortune, and age among men, to all the varieties of time,
“ place, and auditory, the same style of language, and
“ the same strain of thought, cannot agree. In every part
“ of a discourse, just as in every part of life, we must
“ attend to what is suitable and decent; whether that be
“ determined by the nature of the subject of which we treat,
“ or by the characters of those who speak, or of those who
“ hear.”

diffuseness, suited to popular eloquence, it is not easy to fix any exact bounds. I know that it is common to recommend a diffuse manner as the most proper. I am inclined, however, to think, that there is danger of erring in this respect; and that by indulging too much in the diffuse style, public speakers often lose more in point of strength, than they gain by the fulness of their illustration. There is no doubt, that in speaking to a multitude; we must not speak in sentences and apophthegms; care must be taken to explain and to inculcate; but this care may be, and frequently is, carried too far. We ought always to remember, that how much soever we may be pleased with hearing ourselves speak, every audience is very ready to tire; and the moment they begin to tire, all our eloquence goes for nothing. A loose and verbose manner never fails to create disgust; and, on most occasions, we had better run the risk of saying too little, than too much. Better place our thought in one strong point of view, and rest it there, than by turning it into every light, and pouring forth a profusion of words upon it, exhaust the attention of our hearers, and leave them flat and languid.

Of pronunciation and delivery, I am hereafter to treat apart. It is sufficient now to observe, that in speaking to mixt assemblies, the best manner of delivery is the firm and the determined. An arrogant and overbearing manner, is, indeed, always disagreeable; and the least appearance of it ought to be shunned: but there is a certain

decisive tone, which may be assumed even by a modest man, who is thoroughly persuaded of the sentiments he utters; and which is the best calculated for making a general impression. A feeble and hesitating manner bespeaks always some distrust of a man's own opinion; which is, by no means, a favorable circumstance for his inducing others to embrace it.

These are the chief thoughts which have occurred to me from reflection and observation, concerning the peculiar distinguishing characters of the eloquence proper for popular assemblies. The sum of what has been said, is this: The end of popular speaking is persuasion; and this must be founded on conviction. Argument and reasoning must be the basis, if we would be speakers of business, and not mere declaimers. We should be engaged in earnest on the side which we espouse; and utter, as much as possible, our own, and not counterfeited sentiments. The premeditation should be of things, rather than of words. Clear order and method should be studied: The manner and expression warm and animated; though still, in the midst of that vehemence, which may at times be suitable, carried on under the proper restraints, which regard to the audience and to the decorum of character, ought to lay on every public speaker: the style free and easy; strong and descriptive, rather than diffuse; and the delivery determined and firm. To conclude this head, let every orator remember, that the impression made by fine
and

and artful speaking is momentary; that made by argument and good sense, is solid and lasting.

I shall now, that I may afford an exemplification of that species of oratory of which I have been treating, insert some extracts from Demosthenes. Even under the great disadvantage of an English translation, they will exhibit a small specimen of that vigorous and spirited eloquence which I have so often praised. I shall take my extracts mostly from the Philippics and Olynthiacs, which were entirely popular orations spoken to the general convention of the citizens of Athens; and, as the subject of both the Philippics, and the Olynthiacs, is the same, I shall not confine myself to one oration, but shall join together passages taken from two or three of them; such as may show his general strain of speaking, on some of the chief branches of the subject. The subject in general is, to rouse the Athenians to guard against Philip of Macedon, whose growing power and crafty policy had by that time endangered, and soon after overwhelmed the liberties of Greece. The Athenians began to be alarmed; but their deliberations were slow, and their measures feeble; several of their favorite orators having been gained by Philip's bribes to favor his cause. In this critical conjuncture of affairs Demosthenes arose. In the following manner he begins his first Philippic; which, like the

exordiums of all his orations, is simple and artless.*

“ Had we been convened, Athenians! on
“ some new subject of debate, I had waited till
“ most of your usual counsellors had declared
“ their opinions. If I had approved of what was
“ proposed by them, I should have continued
“ silent; if not, I should then have attempted
“ to speak my sentiments. But since those very
“ points on which these speakers have oftentimes
“ been heard already, are at this time to be
“ considered; though I have risen first, I pre-
“ sume I may expect your pardon; for if they
“ on former occasions had advised the proper
“ measures, you would not have found it need-
“ ful to consult at present.

“ First then, Athenians! however wretched
“ the situation of our affairs at present seems,
“ it must not by any means be thought desperate.
“ What I am now going to advance may possibly
“ appear a paradox; yet it is a certain truth,
“ that our past misfortunes afford a circumstance
“ the most favorable of all others to our future
“ hopes †. And what is that? even that our
“ present difficulties are owing entirely to our

* In the following extracts, Leland's translation is mostly followed.

† This thought is only hinted in the first Philippic, but brought out more fully in the third; as the same thoughts, occasioned by similar situations of affairs, sometimes occur in the different orations on this subject.

“ total indolence, and utter disregard to our own
“ interest. For were we thus situated, in spite
“ of every effort which our duty demanded,
“ then indeed we might regard our fortunes as
“ absolutely desperate. But now, Philip hath
“ only conquered your supineness and inactivity;
“ the state he hath not conquered. You cannot
“ be said to be defeated; your force hath never
“ been exerted.

“ If there is a man in this assembly who
“ thinks that we must find a formidable enemy
“ in Philip, while he views on one hand the
“ numerous armies which surround him, and on
“ the other, the weakness of our state, despoiled
“ of so much of its dominions, I cannot deny
“ that he thinks justly. Yet let him reflect on
“ this; there was a time, Athenians! when we
“ possessed Pydna, Potidæa, and Melthone, and
“ all that country round; when many of the
“ states, now subjected to him, were free and
“ independent, and more inclined to our alliance
“ than to his. If Philip, at that time weak in
“ himself and without allies, had desponded of
“ success against you, he would never have en-
“ gaged in those enterprises which are now crown-
“ ed with success, nor could have raised him-
“ self to that pitch of grandeur at which you
“ now behold him. But he knew well that the
“ strongest places are only prizes laid between
“ the combatants, and ready for the conqueror.
“ He knew that the dominions of the absent,
“ devolve naturally to those who are in the field;

“ the possessions of the supine , to the active
“ and intrepid. Animated , by these sentiments
“ he overturns whole nations. He either rules
“ universally as a conqueror , or governs as a
“ protector. For mankind naturally seek confederacy with such , as they see resolved and preparing not to be wanting to themselves.

“ If you , my countrymen ! will now at length
“ be persuaded to entertain the like sentiments ;
“ if each of you will be disposed to approve
“ himself an useful citizen , to the utmost that
“ his station and abilities enable him ; if the rich
“ will be ready to contribute , and the young
“ to take the field ; in one word , if you will be
“ yourselves , and banish these vain hopes which
“ every single person entertains , that the active
“ part of public business may lie upon others
“ and he remain at his ease ; you may then , by
“ the assistance of the Gods , recal those opportunities which your supineness hath neglected ,
“ regain your dominions , and chastise the insolence of this man.

“ But when , O my countrymen ! will you
“ begin to exert your vigor ? Do you wait till
“ roused by some dire event ? till forced by
“ some necessity ? When then are we to think
“ of our present condition ? To free men , the
“ disgrace attending on misconduct is , in my
“ opinion , the most urgent necessity. Or say ,
“ is it your sole ambition to wander through the
“ public places , each inquiring of the other ,
“ What new advices ?” Can any thing be more

“ new, than that a man of Macedon should conquer the Athenians, and give law to Greece?”
“ Is Philip dead?” — “ No — but he is sick.”
“ Pray, what is it to you whether Philip is sick or not? Supposing he should die, you would raise up another Philip, if you continue thus regardless of your interest.”

“ Many, I know, delight more in nothing than in circulating all the rumors they hear as articles of intelligence. Some cry, Philip hath joined with the Lacedæmonians, and they are concerting the destruction of Thebes. Others assure us, he hath sent an embassy to the King of Persia; others, that he is fortifying places in Illyria. Thus we all go about framing our several tales. I do believe indeed, Athenians! that he is intoxicated with his greatness, and does entertain his imagination with many such visionary projects, as he sees no power rising to oppose him. But I cannot be persuaded that he hath so taken his measures, that the weakest among us (for the weakest they are who spread such rumors) know what he is next to do. Let us disregard these tales. Let us only be persuaded of this, that he is our enemy; that we have long been subject to his insolence; that whatever we expected to have been done for us by others, hath turned against us; that all the resources left, are in ourselves; and that if we are not inclined to carry our arms abroad, we shall be forced to engage him at home. Let

“us be persuaded of these things, and then we
“shall come to a proper determination, and be
“no longer guided by rumors. We need not
“be solicitous to know what particular events
“are to happen. We may be well assured that
“nothing good can happen, unless we give due
“attention to our own affairs, and act as be-
“comes Athenians.

“Were it a point generally acknowledged*
“that Philip is now at actual war with the state,
“the only thing under deliberation would then
“be, how to oppose him with most safety.
“But since there are persons so strangely infatuated,
“that although he has already possessed
“himself of a considerable part of our dominions;
“although he is still extending his conquests;
“although all Greece has suffered by his injustice;
“yet they can hear it repeated in this assembly,
“that it is some of us who seek to embroil the
“state in war, this suggestion must first be guarded
“against. I readily admit, that were it
“in our power to determine whether we should
“be at peace or war, peace, if it depended
“on our option, is most desirable to be embraced.
“But if the other party hath drawn
“the sword and gathered his armies round him;
“if he amuses us with the name of peace,
“while, in fact, he is proceeding to the greatest
“hostilities, what is left for us but to oppose
“him? If any man takes that for a peace,

* Phil. iii.

“ which is only a preparation for his leading his
“ forces directly upon us, after his other conquests,
“ I hold that man’s mind to be disordered. At
“ least, it is only our conduct towards Philip,
“ not Philip’s conduct towards us, that is to be
“ termed a peace; and this is the peace for
“ which Philip’s treasures are expended, for
“ which his gold is so liberally scattered among
“ our venal orators, that he may be at liberty
“ to carry on the war against you, while you
“ make no war on him.

“ Heavens! is there any man of a right mind
“ who would judge of peace or war by words,
“ and not by actions? Is there any man so weak
“ as to imagine that it is for the sake of those paltry
“ villages of Thrace, Drongylus, and Cabyle,
“ and Mastira, that Philip is now braving the
“ utmost dangers, and enduring the severity of
“ toils and seasons; and that he has no designs
“ upon the arsenals, and the navies, and the
“ silver mines of Athens? or that he will take up
“ his winter quarters among the cells and dun-
“ geons of Thrace, and leave you to enjoy all
“ your revenues in peace? But you wait, per-
“ haps, till he declare war against you.—He will
“ never do so—no, though he were at your gates.
“ He will still be assuring you that he is not at
“ war. Such were his professions to the people
“ of Oreum, when his forces were in the heart
“ of their country; such his professions to those
“ of Pheræ, until the moment he attacked their
“ walls: and thus he amused the Olynthians till

“ he came within a few miles of them, and then
“ he sent them a message, that either they must
“ quit their city, or he his kingdom. He would
“ indeed be the absurdest of mankind, if, while
“ you suffer his outrages to pass unnoticed, and
“ are wholly engaged in accusing and prosecuting
“ one another, he should, by declaring, war,
“ put an end to your private contests, warn you
“ to direct all your zeal against him, and deprive
“ his pensioners of their most specious pretence
“ for suspending your resolutions, that of his not
“ being at war with the state. I, for my part,
“ hold and declare, that by his attack of the
“ Megaræans, by his attempts upon the liberty
“ of Eubœa, by his late incursions into Thrace,
“ by his practices in Peloponnesus, Philip has
“ violated the treaty; he is in a state of hosti-
“ lity with you; unless you shall affirm, that
“ he who prepares to besiege a city, is still at
“ peace, until the walls be actually invested.
“ The man whose designs, whose whole conduct
“ tends to reduce me to subjection, that man is
“ at war with me, though not a blow hath yet
“ been given, nor a sword drawn.
“ All Greece, all the barbarian world, is too
“ narrow for this man's ambition. — And, though
“ we Greeks see and hear all this, we send no
“ embassies to each other; we express no resent-
“ ment; but into such wretchedness are we sunk,
“ that even, to this day, we neglect what our
“ interest and duty demand. Without engaging
“ in associations, or forming confederacies, we

“ look with unconcern upon Philip’s growing
“ power; each fondly imagining, that the time
“ in which another is destroyed, is so much time
“ gained to him; although no man can be igno-
“ rant, that, like the regular periodic return of
“ a fever, he is coming upon those who think
“ themselves the most remote from danger.—And
“ what is the cause of our present passive disposi-
“ tion? For some cause sure there must be, why
“ the Greeks, who have been so zealous hereto-
“ fore in defence of liberty, are now so prone
“ to slavery. The cause, Athenians! is, that a
“ principle, which was formerly fixed in the
“ minds of all, now exists no more; a principle
“ which conquered the opulence of Persia; main-
“ tained the freedom of Greece, and triumphed
“ over the powers of sea and land. That prin-
“ ciple was, an unanimous abhorrence of all those
“ who accepted bribes from princes, that were
“ enemies to the liberties of Greece. To be con-
“ victed of bribery, was then a crime altogether
“ unpardonable. Neither orators, nor generals,
“ would then sell for gold the favorable conjunc-
“ tures which fortune put into their hands. No
“ gold could impair our firm concord at home,
“ our hatred and diffidence of tyrants and bar-
“ barians. But now all things are exposed to sale,
“ as in a public market. Corruption has intro-
“ duced such manners, as have proved the bane
“ and destruction of our country. Is a man known
“ to have received foreign money? People envy him.
“ Does he own it? They laugh. Is he convicted

“ in form? They forgive him: so universally has
“ this contagion diffused itself among us.

“ If there be any who, though not carried
“ away by bribes, yet are struck with terror, as
“ if Philip was something more than human, they
“ may see, upon a little consideration, that he
“ hath exhausted all those artifices to which he
“ owes his present elevation; and that his affairs
“ are now ready to decline. For I myself, Athe-
“ nians! should think Philip really to be dreaded,
“ if I saw him raised by honorable means.—

“ When forces join in harmony and affection,
“ and one common interest unites confederating
“ powers, then they share the toils with alacrity,
“ and endure distresses with perseverance. But
“ when extravagant ambition, and lawless power,
“ as in the case of Philip, have aggrandized a
“ single person, the first pretence, the slightest
“ accident, overthrows him, and dashes his great-
“ ness to the ground. For, it is not possible,
“ Athenians! it is not possible, to found a lasting
“ power upon injustice, perjury, and treachery.
“ These may perhaps succeed for once; and borrow
“ for a while, from hope, a gay and a flourishing
“ appearance. But time betrays their weakness,
“ and they fall of themselves to ruin. For as in
“ structures of every kind, the lower parts should
“ have the firmest stability, so the grounds and
“ principles of great enterprises should be justice
“ and truth. But this solid foundation is want-
“ ing to all the enterprises of Philip.

“ Hence, among his confederates, there are
“ many who hate, who distrust, who envy him.

“ If you will exert yourselves, as your honor and
“ your interest require, you will not only dis-
“ cover the weakness and insincerity of his confe-
“ derates, but the ruinous condition also of his
“ own kingdom. For you are not to imagine,
“ that the inclinations of his subjects are the same
“ with those of their prince. He thirsts for glory;
“ but they have no part in this ambition. Harassed
“ by those various excursions he is ever making,
“ they groan under perpetual calamity; torn from
“ their business and their families; and beholding
“ commerce excluded from their coasts. All
“ those glaring exploits, which have given him
“ his apparent greatness, have wasted his natural
“ strength, his own kingdom, and rendered it
“ much weaker than it originally was. Besides,
“ his profligacy and baseness, and those troops,
“ of buffoons, and dissolute persons, whom he
“ caresses and keeps constantly about him, are,
“ to men of just discernment, great indications
“ of the weakness of his mind. At present, his
“ successes cast a shade over these things; but let
“ his arms meet with the least disgrace, his fee-
“ bleness will appear, and his character be exposed.
“ For, as in our bodies, while a man is in ap-
“ parent health, the effect of some inward debi-
“ lity, which has been growing upon him, may,
“ for a time, be concealed; but, as soon as it
“ comes the length of disease, all his secret infir-
“ mities show themselves in whatever part of his
“ frame the disorder is lodged: so, in states and
“ monarchies, while they carry on a war abroad,

“ many defects escape the general eye; but, as
“ soon as war reaches their own territory, their
“ infirmities come forth to general observation.

“ Fortune has great influence in all human
“ affairs; but I, for my part, should prefer the
“ fortune of Athens, with the least degree of
“ vigor in asserting your cause, to this man’s
“ fortune. For we have many better reasons to
“ depend upon the favor of heaven than this man.
“ But, indeed, he who will not exert his own
“ strength, hath no title to depend either on his
“ friends, or on the Gods. Is it at all surprising
“ that he, who is himself ever amidst the labors
“ and dangers of the field; who is every where,
“ whom no opportunity escapes; to whom no
“ season is unfavorable; should be superior to you,
“ who are wholly engaged in contriving delays,
“ and framing decrees, and inquiring after news?
“ The contrary would be much more surprising,
“ if we, who have never hitherto acted as be-
“ came a state engaged in war, should conquer
“ one who acts, in every instance, with indefati-
“ gable vigilance. It is this, Athenians! It is this
“ which gives him all his advantage against you.
“ Philip, constantly surrounded by his troops,
“ and perpetually engaged in projecting his designs,
“ can, in a moment, strike the blow where he
“ pleases. But we, when any accident alarms
“ us, first appoint our Trierachs; then we allow
“ them the exchange by substitution: then the
“ supplies are considered; next, we resolve to

“ man our fleet with strangers and foreigners;
 “ then find it necessary to supply their place
 “ ourselves. In the midst of these delays, what
 “ we are failing to defend, the enemy is already
 “ master of; for the time of action is spent by
 “ us in preparing; and the issues of war will not
 “ wait for our slow and irresolute measures.

“ Consider then your present situation, and
 “ make such provision as the urgent danger re-
 “ quires. Talk not of your ten thousand, or your
 “ twenty thousand foreigners; of those armies
 “ which appear so magnificent on paper only;
 “ great and terrible in your decrees, in execu-
 “ tion weak and contemptible. But let your army
 “ be made up chiefly of the native forces of the
 “ state; let it be an Athenian strength to which
 “ you are to trust; and whomsoever you ap-
 “ point as general, let them, be entirely under
 “ his guidance and authority. For, ever since
 “ our armies have been formed of foreigners
 “ alone, their victories have been gained over our
 “ allies and confederates only, while our enemies
 “ have risen to an extravagance of power.”

The orator goes on to point out the number of
 forces which should be raised; the places of their
 destination; the season of the year in which they
 should set out; and then proposes in form his mo-
 tion, as we would call it, or his decree, for the
 necessary supply of money, and for ascertaining
 the funds from which it should be raised. Having
 finished all that relates to the business under deli-
 beration, he concludes these orations on public

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affairs, commonly with no longer peroration than the following, which terminates the first Philippic:
 “ I, for my part, have never, upon any occasion,
 “ chosen to court your favor, by speaking any
 “ thing but what I was convinced would serve
 “ you. And, on this occasion, you have heard
 “ my sentiments freely declared, without art, and
 “ without reserve. I should have been pleased,
 “ indeed, that, as it is for your advantage to have
 “ your true interest laid before you, so I might
 “ have been assured, that he who layeth it before
 “ you would share the advantage. But, uncertain as
 “ I know the consequence to be with respect to
 “ myself, I yet determined to speak, because, I
 “ was convinced, that these measures if pursued,
 “ must prove beneficial to the public. And, of
 “ all those opinions which shall be offered to your
 “ acceptance, may the Gods determine that to be
 “ chosen which will best advance the general
 “ welfare!”

These extracts may serve to give some imperfect idea of the manner of Demosthenes. For a juster and more complete one, recourse must be had to the excellent original.

LECTURE XXVIII.

Eloquence of the Bar. — Analysis of Cicero's Oration for Cluentius.

I TREATED in the last lecture, of what is peculiar to the eloquence of popular assemblies. Much of what was said on that head is applicable to the eloquence of the bar, the next great scene of public speaking to which I now proceed, and my observations upon which, will therefore be the shorter. All, however, that was said in the former lecture must not be applied to it; and it is of importance, that I begin with showing where the distinction lies.

In the first place, the ends of speaking at the bar, and in popular assemblies, are commonly different. In popular assemblies, the great object is persuasion; the orator aims at determining the hearers to some choice or conduct, as good, fit, or useful. For accomplishing this end, it is incumbent on him to apply himself to all the principles of action in our nature; to the passions

and to the heart, as well as to the understanding. But, at the bar, conviction is the great object. There, it is not the speaker's business to persuade the judges to what is good or useful, but to show them what is just and true; and, of course, it is chiefly, or solely, to the understanding that his eloquence is addressed. This is a characteristical difference which ought ever to be kept in view.

In the next place, speakers at the bar address themselves to one, or to a few judges, and these, too, persons generally of age, gravity, and authority of character. There, they have not those advantages which a mixed and numerous assembly affords for employing all the arts of speech, even supposing their subject to admit them. Passion does not rise so easily; the speaker is heard more coolly; he is watched over more severely; and would expose himself to ridicule, by attempting that high vehement tone, which is only proper in speaking to a multitude.

In the last place, the nature and management of the subjects which belong to the bar, require a very different species of oratory from that of popular assemblies. In the latter, the speaker has a much wider range. He is seldom confined to any precise rule; he can fetch his topics from a great variety of quarters; and employ every illustration which his fancy or imagination suggest. But, at the bar, the field of speaking is limited to precise law and statute. Imagination is not allowed to take its scope. The advocate
has

has always lying before him the line, the square, and the compass. These, it is his principal business to be continually applying to the subjects under debate.

For these reasons, it is clear, that the eloquence of the bar is of a much more limited, more sober and chastened kind, than that of popular assemblies; and, for similar reasons, we must beware of considering even the judicial orations of Cicero or Demosthenes, as exact models of the manner of speaking which is adapted to the present state of the bar. It is necessary to warn young lawyers of this; because, though these were pleadings spoken in civil or criminal causes, yet, in fact, the nature of the bar anciently, both in Greece and Rome, allowed a much nearer approach to popular eloquence, than what it now does. This was owing chiefly to two causes:

First, because in the ancient judicial orations, strict law was much less an object of attention than it is become among us. In the days of Demosthenes and Cicero, the municipal statutes were few, simple, and general; and the decision of causes was trusted, in a great measure, to the equity and common sense of the judges. Eloquence, much more than jurisprudence, was the study of those who were to plead causes. Cicero somewhere says, that three months study was sufficient to make any man a complete civilian; nay, it was thought that one might be a good pleader at the bar, who had never

studied law at all. For there were among the Romans a set of men called *pragmatici*, whose office it was to give the orator all the law knowledge which the cause he was to plead required, and which he put into that popular form, and dressed up with those colors of eloquence, that were most fitted for influencing the judges before whom he spoke.

We may observe next, that the civil and criminal judges, both in Greece and Rome, were commonly much more numerous than they are with us, and formed a sort of popular assembly. The renowned tribunal of the Areopagus at Athens consisted of fifty judges at the least*. Some make it to consist of a great many more. When Socrates was condemned, by what court it is uncertain, we are informed that no fewer than 280 voted against him. In Rome, the prætor, who was the proper judge both in civil and criminal causes, named, for every cause of moment, the *judices selecti*, as they were called, who were always numerous, and had the office and power of both judge and jury. In the famous cause of Milo, Cicero spoke to fifty-one *judices selecti*, and so had the advantage of addressing his whole pleading, not to one or a few learned judges of the point of law, as is the case with us, but to an assembly of Roman citizens. Hence all those arts of popular eloquence, which we find the Roman orator so frequently employing,

* Vide Potter, Antiq. vol. i. p. 102.

and probably with much success. Hence tears and commiseration are so often made use of as the instruments of gaining a cause. Hence certain practices, which would be reckoned theatrical among us, were common at the Roman bar; such as introducing not only the accused person dressed in deep mourning, but presenting to the judges his family, and his young children, endeavouring to move them by their cries and tears.

For these reasons, on account of the wide difference between the ancient and modern state of the bar, to which we may add also the difference in the turn of ancient and modern eloquence, which I formerly took notice of, too strict an imitation of Cicero's manner of pleading would now be extremely injudicious. To great advantage he may still be studied by every speaker at the bar. In the address with which he opens his subject, and the insinuation he employs for gaining the favor of the judges; in the distinct arrangement of his facts; in the gracefulness of his narration; in the conduct and exposition of his arguments, he may and he ought to be imitated. A higher pattern cannot be set before us; but one who should imitate him also in his exaggeration and amplifications, in his diffuse and pompous declamation, and in his attempts to raise passion, would now make himself almost as ridiculous at the bar, as if he should appear there in the *toga* of a Roman lawyer.

Before I descend to more particular directions concerning the eloquence of the bar, I must be allowed to take notice, that the foundation of a lawyer's reputation and success, must always be laid in a profound knowledge of his own profession. Nothing is of such consequence to him, or deserves more his deep and serious study. For whatever his abilities as a speaker may be, if his knowledge of the law be reckoned superficial, few will chuse to commit their cause to him. Besides previous study, and a proper stock of knowledge attained, another thing highly material to the success of every pleader, is, a diligent and painful attention to every cause with which he is intrusted, so as to be thoroughly master of all the facts and circumstances relating to it. On this the ancient rhetoricians insist with great earnestness, and justly represent it as a necessary basis to all the eloquence that can be exerted in pleading. Cicero tells us (under the character of Antonius, in the second book *De Oratore*), that he always conversed at full length with every client who came to consult him; that he took care there should be no witness to their conversation, in order that his client might explain himself more freely; that he was wont to start every objection, and to plead the cause of the adverse party with him, that he might come at the whole truth, and be fully prepared on every point of the business; and that, after the client had retired, he used to balance all the facts with himself, under three different characters, his own,

that of the judge, and that of the advocate on the opposite side. He censures very severely those of the profession who decline taking so much trouble; taxing them not only with shameful negligence, but with dishonesty and breach of trust *. To the same purpose Quinctilian, in the eighth chapter of his last book, delivers a great many excellent rules concerning all the methods which a lawyer should employ for attaining the most thorough knowledge of the cause he is to plead; again and again recommending patience and attention in conversation with clients, and observing very sensibly, “Non tam obest audire
“supervacua, quam ignorare necessaria. Fre-
“quenter enim & vulnus, & remedium, in iis
“orator inveniet quæ litigatori in neutram par-
“tem, habere momentum videbantur. †”

* “Equidem soleo dare operam, ut de sua quisque re me
“ipse doceat; & ne quis alius adsit, quo liberius loquatur;
“& agere adversarii causam, ut ille agat suam; & quicquid
“de sua re cogitaret, in medium proferat. Itaque cum ille
“decessit, tres personas unus sustineo, summa animi equi-
“tate; meam, adversarii, judicis. — Nonnulli dum operam
“suam multam existimari volunt, ut toto foro volitare, &
“a causa ad causam ire videantur, causas dicunt incognitas.
“In quo est illa quidem magna offensio, vel negligentiae sus-
“ceptis rebus, vel perfidiæ receptis; sed etiam illa, major
“opinione, quod nemo potest de ea re quam non novit, non
“turpissime dicere.”

† “To listen to something that is superfluous can do no
“hurt; whereas, to be ignorant of something that is ma-
“terial, may be highly prejudicial. The advocate will fre-
“quently discover the weak side of a cause, and learn, at

Supposing an advocate to be thus prepared, with all the knowledge which the study of the law in general, and of that cause which he is to plead in particular, can furnish him, I must next observe, that eloquence in pleading is of the highest moment for giving support to a cause. It were altogether wrong to infer, that because the ancient popular and vehement manner of pleading is now in a great measure, superseded, there is therefore no room for eloquence at the bar, and that the study of it is become superfluous. Though the manner of speaking be changed, yet still there is a right and a proper manner, which deserves to be studied as much as ever. Perhaps there is no scene of public speaking where eloquence is more necessary. For on other occasions, the subject on which men speak in public, is frequently sufficient, by itself to interest the hearers. But the dryness and subtilty of the subjects generally agitated at the bar, require more than any other a certain kind of eloquence in order to command attention; in order to give proper weight to the arguments that are employed, and to prevent any thing which the pleader advances from passing unregarded. The effect of good speaking is always very great. There is as much difference in the impression made upon the hearers,

“ the same time, what is the proper defence, from circumstan-
“ ces which, to the party himself, appeared to be of little or
“ no moment.”

by a cold, dry, and confused speaker, and that made by one who pleads the same cause with elegance, order, and strength, as there is between our conception of an object, when it is presented to us in a dim light, and when we behold it in a full and clear one.

It is no small encouragement to eloquence at the bar, that of all the liberal professions, none gives fairer play to genius and abilities than that of the advocate. He is less exposed than some others, to suffer by the arts of rivalry, by popular prejudices, or secret intrigues. He is sure of coming forward according to his merit: For he stands forth every day to view; he enters the list boldly with his competitors; every appearance which he makes is an appeal to the public, whose decision seldom fails of being just, because it is impartial. Interest and friends may set forward a young pleader with peculiar advantages beyond others, at the beginning; but they can do no more than open the field to him. A reputation resting on these assistances will soon fall. Spectators remark, judges decide, parties watch; and to him will the multitude of clients never fail to resort, who gives the most approved specimens of his knowledge, eloquence, and industry.

It must be laid down for a first principle, that the eloquence suited to the bar, whether in speaking or in writing law-papers, is of the calm and temperate kind, and connected with close reasoning. Sometimes a little play may be allowed to the

imagination, in order to enliven a dry subject, and to give relief to the fatigue of attention; but this liberty must be taken with a sparing hand. For a florid style, and a sparkling manner, never fail to make the speaker be heard with a jealous ear by the judge. They detract from his weight, and always produce a suspicion of his failing in soundness and strength of argument. It is purity and neatness of expression which is chiefly to be studied, a style perspicuous and proper which shall not be needlessly overcharged with the pedantry of law terms, and where, at the same time, no affectation shall appear of avoiding these, when they are suitable and necessary.

Verbosity is a common fault, of which the gentlemen of this profession are accused; and into which the habit of speaking and writing so hastily, and with so little preparation, as they are often obliged to do, almost unavoidably betrays them. It cannot, therefore, be too much recommended to those who are beginning to practise at the bar, that they should early study to guard against this, while as yet they have full leisure for preparation. Let them form themselves, especially in the papers which they write, to the habit of a strong and a correct style; which expresses the same thing much better in a few words, than is done, by the accumulation of intricate and endless periods. If this habit be once acquired, it will become natural to them afterwards, when the multiplicity of business shall force them to compose in a more precipitant manner. Whereas

if the practice of a loose and negligent style has been suffered to become familiar, it will not be in their power, even upon occasions when they wish to make an unusual effort, to express themselves with energy and grace.

Distinctness is a capital property in speaking at the bar. This should be shown chiefly in two things; first, in stating the question; in showing clearly what is the point in debate; what we admit; what we deny; and where the line of division begins between us, and the adverse party. Next, it should be shown in the order and arrangement of all the parts of the pleading. In every sort of oration, a clear method is of the utmost consequence; but in those embroiled and difficult cases which belong to the bar, it is almost all in all. Too much pains, therefore, cannot be taken in previously studying the plan and method. If there be indistinctness and disorder there, we can have no success in convincing: we leave the whole cause in darkness.

With respect to the conduct of narration and argumentation, I shall hereafter make several remarks, when I come to treat of the component parts of regular oration. I shall at present only observe, that the narration of facts at the bar, should always be as concise as the nature of them will admit. Facts are always of the greatest consequence to be remembered during the course of the pleading; but, if the pleader be tedious in his manner of relating them, and needlessly circumstantial, he lays too great a load upon the memory.

Whereas, by cutting off all superfluous circumstances in his recital, he adds strength to the material facts; he both gives a clearer view of what he relates, and makes the impression of it more lasting. In argumentation, again, I would incline to give scope to a more diffuse manner at the bar, than on some other occasions. For in popular assemblies, where the subject of debate is often a plain question, arguments, taken from known topics, gain strength by their conciseness. But the obscurity of law-points frequently requires the arguments to be spread out, and placed in different lights, in order to be fully apprehended.

When the pleader comes to refute the arguments employed by his adversary, he should be on his guard not to do them injustice, by disguising, or placing them in a false light. The deceit is soon discovered: it will not fail of being exposed; and tends to impress the judge and the hearers with distrust of the speaker, as one who either wants discernment to perceive, or wants fairness to admit, the strength of the reasoning on the other side. Whereas, when they see that he states, with accuracy and candor, the arguments which have been used against him, before he proceeds to combat them, a strong prejudice is created in his favor. They are naturally led to think, that he has a clear and full conception of all that can be said on both sides of the argument; that he has entire confidence in the goodness of his own cause; and does not attempt to support it by any artifice or concealment.

The judge is thereby inclined to receive, much more readily, the impressions which are given by a speaker, who appears both so fair and so penetrating. There is no part of the discourse in which the orator has greater opportunity of showing a masterly address, than when he sets himself to represent the reasonings of his antagonists, in order to refute them.

Wit may sometimes be of service at the bar, especially in a lively reply, by which we may throw ridicule on something that has been said on the other side. But, though the reputation of wit be dazzling to a young pleader, I would never advise him to rest his strength upon this talent. It is not his business to make an audience laugh, but to convince the judge; and seldom, or never, did any one rise to eminence in his profession, by being a witty lawyer.

A proper degree of warmth in pleading a cause is always of use. Though, in speaking to a multitude, greater vehemence be natural; yet, in addressing ourselves even to a single man, the warmth which arises from seriousness and earnestness, is one of the most powerful means of persuading him. An advocate personates his client; he has taken upon him the whole charge of his interests; he stands in his place. It is improper, therefore, and has a bad effect upon the cause, if he appears indifferent and unmoved; and few clients will be fond of trusting their interests in the hands of a cold speaker.

At the same time, he must beware of prostituting his earnestness and sensibility so much, as to enter with equal warmth into every cause that is committed to him, whether it can be supposed really to excite his zeal or not. There is a dignity of character, which it is of the utmost importance for every one in this profession to support. For it must never be forgotten, that there is no instrument of persuasion more powerful, than an opinion of probity and honor in the person who undertakes to persuade *. It is scarcely possible for any hearer to separate altogether the impression made by the character of him that speaks, from the things that he says. However secretly and imperceptibly, it will be always lending its weight to one side or other; either detracting from, or adding to, the authority and influence of his speech. This opinion of honor and probity must therefore be carefully preserved, both by some degree of delicacy in the choice of causes, and by the manner of conducting them. And though perhaps, the nature of the profession may render it extremely difficult to carry this delicacy its utmost length, yet there are attentions to this point which, as every good man for virtue's sake, so every prudent man for reputation's sake, will find to be necessary. He will always decline embarking in causes that are odious and manifestly unjust;

* "Plurimum ad omnia momenti est in hoc positum, si vir bonus creditur. Sic enim contingit, ut non studium advocati, videatur afferre, sed pene testis fidem." QUINCT. L. iv. C. i.

and, when he supports a doubtful cause, he will lay the chief stress upon such arguments as appear to his own judgment the most tenable; reserving his zeal and his indignation for cases wherein justice and iniquity are flagrant. But of the personal qualities and virtues requisite in public speakers, I shall afterwards have occasion to discourse.

These are the chief directions which have occurred to me concerning the peculiar strain of speaking at the bar. In order to illustrate the subject farther, I shall give a short analysis of one of Cicero's pleadings, or judicial orations. I have chosen that, *pro Cluentio*. The celebrated one *pro Milone* is more labored and showy; but it is too declamatory. That, *pro Cluentio* comes nearer the strain of a modern pleading; and though it has the disadvantage of being very long, and complicated too, in the subject, yet it is one of the most chaste, correct and forcible of all Cicero's judicial orations, and well deserves attention for its conduct.

Avitus Cluentius, a Roman knight of splendid family and fortune, had accused his stepfather Oppianicus of an attempt to poison him. He prevailed in the prosecution; Oppianicus was condemned and banished. But as rumors arose of the judges having been corrupted by money in this cause, these gave occasion to much popular clamor, and had thrown a heavy odium on Cluentius. Eight years afterwards Oppianicus died. An accusation

was brought against Cluentius of having poisoned him, together with a charge also of having bribed the judges in the former trial to condemn him. In this action Cicero defends him. The accusers were Saffia, the mother of Cluentius, and widow of Oppianicus, and young Oppianicus, the son. Q. Naso, the prætor, was judge, together with a considerable number of *judices selecti*.

The introduction of the oration is simple and proper, taken from no common-place topic, but from the nature of the cause. It begins with taking notice, that the whole oration of the accuser was divided into two parts *. These two parts were, the charge of having poisoned Oppianicus; on which the accuser, conscious of having no proof, did not lay the stress of his cause; but rested it chiefly on the other charge of formerly corrupting the judges, which was capital in certain cases, by the Roman law. Cicero purposes to follow him in this method, and to apply himself chiefly to the vindication of his client from the latter charge. He makes

* “ Animadvertite, judices, omnem accusatoris orationem
 “ in duas divisam esse partes; quarum altera mihi niti &
 “ magnopere confidere videbatur, invidia jam inveterata judicii
 “ Juniani; altera tantummodo consuetudinis causa, timide
 “ & diffidenter attingere rationem veneficii criminum; qua
 “ de re lege est hæc questio constituta. Itaque mihi cer-
 “ tum est hanc eandem distributionem invidiæ & criminum
 “ sic in defensione servare, ut omnes intelligant, nihil
 “ me nec subterfugere voluisse reticendo, nec obscurare
 “ dicendo.”

several proper observations on the danger of judges suffering themselves to be swayed by a popular cry, which often is raised by faction, and directed against the innocent. He acknowledges, that Cluentius had suffered much and long by reproach, on account of what had passed at the former trial; but begs only patient and attentive hearing, and assures the judges, that he will state every thing relating to that matter so fairly and so clearly, as shall give them entire satisfaction. A great appearance of candor reigns throughout this introduction.

The crimes with which Cluentius was charged, were heinous. A mother accusing her son, and accusing him of such actions, as having first bribed judges to condemn her husband, and having afterwards poisoned him, were circumstances that naturally raised strong prejudices against Cicero's client. The first step, therefore, necessary for the orator, was to remove these prejudices; by showing what sort of persons Cluentius's mother, and her husband Oppianicus, were; and thereby turning the edge of public indignation against them. The nature of the cause rendered this plan altogether proper, and, in similar situations, it is fit to be imitated. He executes his plan with much eloquence and force; and, in doing it, lays open such a scene of infamy and complicated guilt, as gives a shocking picture of the manners of that age; and such as would seem incredible, did not Cicero refer to

the proof that was taken in the former trial, of the facts which he alledges.

Saffia, the mother, appears to have been altogether of an abandoned character. Soon after the death of her first husband, the father of Cluentius, she fell in love with Aurius Melinus, a young man of illustrious birth and great fortune, who was married to her own daughter. She prevailed with him to divorce her daughter, and then she married him herself *. This Melinus being afterwards, by the means of Oppianicus, involved in Sylla's proscription, and put to death; and Saffia being left, for the second time, a widow, and in a very opulent situation, Oppianicus himself made his addresses to her. She, not startled at the impudence of the proposal, nor at the thoughts of marrying one, whose hands had been imbrued in her former husband's blood, objected only, as Cicero says, to Oppianicus having

* "Lectum illum genialem quem biennio ante filia suæ
 "nubenti straverat, in eadem domo sibi ornari & sterni ex-
 "pulsa atque exturbata filia, jubet. Nubit genero focrus,
 "nullis auspiciis, funestis ominibus omnium. O mulieris
 "scelus incredibile, & præter hanc unam, in omni vita
 "inauditum! O audaciam singularem! non timuisse, si minus
 "vim Deorum, hominumque famam, at illam ipsam noctem,
 "facesque illas nuptiales? non limen cubiculi? non cubile
 "filia? non parietes denique ipsos superiorum testes nuptia-
 "rum? perfregit ac prostravit omnia cupiditate & furore;
 "vicit pudorem libido; timorem audacia; rationem amen-
 "tia." — The warmth of Cicero's eloquence, which this
 passage beautifully exemplifies, is here fully justified by the
 subject.

having two sons by his present wife. Oppianicus removed the objection, by having his sons privately dispatched; and then, divorcing his wife, the infamous match was concluded between him and Saffia. These flagrant deeds are painted, as we may well believe, with the highest colors of Cicero's eloquence, which there has a very proper field. Cluentius, as a man of honor, could no longer live on any tolerable terms with a woman, a mother only in the name, who had loaded herself and all her family with so much dishonor; and hence, the feud which had ever since subsisted between them, and had involved her unfortunate son in so much trouble and persecution. As for Oppianicus, Cicero gives a sort of history of his life, and a full detail of his crimes; and by what he relates, Oppianicus appears to have been a man daring, fierce, and cruel, insatiable in avarice and ambition; trained and hardened in all the crimes which those turbulent times of Marius and Sylla's proscriptions produced: "such a man," says our orator, "as
 " in place of being surprised that he was con-
 " demned, you ought rather to wonder that he
 " had escaped so long."

And now, having prepared the way by all this narration, which is clear and elegant, he enters on the history of that famous trial in which his client was charged with corrupting the judges. Both Cluentius and Oppianicus were of the city Larinum. In a public contest about the rights of the freemen of that city, they had

taken opposite sides, which embittered the misunderstanding already subsisting between them. Saffia, now the wife of Oppianicus, pushed him on to the destruction of her son, whom she had long hated, as one who was conscious of her crimes; and as Cluentius was known to have made no will, they expected, upon his death, to succeed to his fortune. The plan was formed, therefore, to dispatch him by poison; which, considering their former conduct, is no incredible part of the story. Cluentius was at that time indisposed: the servant of his physician was to be bribed to give him poison, and one Fabricius, an intimate friend of Oppianicus, was employed in the negotiation. The servant having made the discovery, Cluentius first prosecuted Scamander, a freedman of Fabricius, in whose custody the poison was found; and afterwards Fabricius, for this attempt upon his life. He prevailed in both actions: and both these persons were condemned by the voices, almost unanimous, of the judges.

Of both these *præjudicia*, as our author calls them, or previous trials, he gives a very particular account; and rests upon them a great part of his argument, as, in neither of them, there was the least charge or suspicion of any attempt to corrupt the judges. But in both these trials, Oppianicus was pointed at plainly; in both, Scamander and Fabricius were prosecuted as only the instruments and ministers of his cruel designs. As a natural consequence, therefore,

Cluentius immediately afterwards raised a third prosecution against Oppianicus himself, the contriver and author of the whole. It was in this prosecution, that money was said to have been given to the judges; all Rome was filled with the report of it, and the alarm loudly raised, that no man's life or liberty was safe, if such dangerous practices were not checked. By the following arguments, Cicero defends his client against this heavy charge of the *crimen corrupti judicii*.

He reasons first, that there was not the least reason to suspect it; seeing the condemnation of Oppianicus was a direct and necessary consequence of the judgments given against Scamander and Fabricius, in the two former trials; trials, that were fair and uncorrupted, to the satisfaction of the whole world. Yet by these, the road was laid clearly open to the detection of Oppianicus's guilt. His instruments and ministers being once condemned, and by the very same judges too, nothing could be more absurd than to raise a cry about an innocent person being circumvened by bribery, when it was evident, on the contrary, that a guilty person was now brought into judgment, under such circumstances, that unless the judges were altogether inconsistent with themselves, it was impossible for him to be acquitted.

He reasons next, that, if in this trial there was any corruption of the judges by money, it was infinitely more probable, that corruption

should have proceeded from Oppianicus than from Cluentius. For setting aside the difference of character between the two men, the one fair, the other flagitious; what motive had Cluentius to try so odious and dangerous an experiment, as that of bribing judges? Was it not much more likely that he should have had recourse to this last remedy, who saw and knew himself, and his cause, to be in the utmost danger; than the other, who had a cause clear in itself, and of the issue of which, in consequence of the two previous sentences given by the same judges, he had full reason to be confident? Was it not much more likely that he should bribe, who had every thing to fear; whose life and liberty, and fortune were at stake; than he who had already prevailed in a material part of his charge, and who had no further interest in the issue of the prosecution, than as justice was concerned?

In the third place, he asserts it as a certain fact, that Oppianicus did attempt to bribe the judges; that the corruption in this trial, so much complained of, was employed, not by Cluentius, but against him. He calls on Titus Attius, the orator on the opposite side; he challenges him to deny, if he can, or if he dare, that Stalenus, one of the thirty-two *judices selecti*, did receive money from Oppianicus; he names the sum that was given; he names the persons that were present, when, after the trial was over, Stalenus was obliged to refund the bribe. This is a strong fact, and would seem

quite decisive. But, unluckily, a very cross circumstance occurs here. For this very Stalenus gave his voice to condemn Oppianicus. For this strange incident, Cicero accounts in the following manner: Stalenus, says he, known to be a worthless man, and accustomed before to the like practices, entered into a treaty with Oppianicus to bring him off, and demanded for that purpose a certain sum, which he undertook to distribute among a competent number of the other judges. When he was once in possession of the money; when he found a greater treasure, than ever he had been master of, deposited in his empty and wretched habitation, he became very unwilling to part with any of it to his colleagues; and bethought himself of some means by which he could contrive to keep it all to himself. The scheme which he devised for this purpose, was, to promote the condemnation, instead of the acquittal of Oppianicus; as, from a condemned person, he did not apprehend much danger of being called to account, or being obliged to make restitution. In place, therefore, of endeavouring to gain any of his colleagues, he irritated such as he had influence with against Oppianicus, by first promising them money in his name, and afterwards telling them, that Oppianicus had cheated him*. When sentence

* “ Cum esset egens, sumptuosus, audax, callidus, perfidiosus; & cum domi suæ, miserrimis in locis, & inanissimis, tantum nummorum positum videret, ad omnem malitiam & fraudem versare mentem suam cœpit. “ Demne

was to be pronounced, he had taken measures for being absent himself; but being brought by Oppianicus's lawyers from another court, and obliged to give his voice, he found it necessary to lead the way, in condemning the man whose money he had taken, without fulfilling the bargain which he had made with him.

By these plausible facts and reasonings, the character of Cluentius seems in a great measure cleared; and what Cicero chiefly intended, the odium thrown upon the adverse party. But a difficult part of the orator's business still remained. There were several subsequent decisions of the prætor, the censors, and the senate, against the judges in this cause; which all proceeded, or seemed to proceed, upon this ground of bribery and corruption: for it is plain the suspicion prevailed, that if Oppianicus had given money to Stalenus, Cluentius had outbribed him. To all these decisions, however, Cicero replies with much distinctness and subtilty of argument; though it might be tedious to follow him through all his reasonings on these heads. He shows, that the facts

“judicibus, mihi igitur ipsi, præter periculum & infamiam
 “quid quæretur? Siquis eum forte casus ex periculo eripuerit,
 “nonne reddendum est? præcipitantem igitur impellamus,
 “inquit, & perditum prosternamus.” Capit hoc consilium
 “ut pecuniam quibusdam judicibus levissimis polliceatur, deinde
 “eam postea supprimat; ut quoniam graves homines sua sponte
 “severe judicatueros putabat, hos qui leviores erant, destitu-
 “tione iratos Oppianico redderet.”

were, at that time, very indistinctly known; that the decisions appealed to were hastily given; that not one of them concluded directly against his client; and that such as they were, they were entirely brought about by the inflammatory and factious harangues of Quinctius, the tribune of the people, who had been the agent and advocate of Oppianicus; and who, enraged at the defeat he had sustained, had employed all his tribunitial influence to raise a storm against the judges who condemned his client.

At length, Cicero comes to reason concerning the point of law. The *crimen corrupti judicii*, or the bribing of the judges, was capital. In the famous *lex Cornelia de sicariis*, was contained this clause (which we find still extant, Pandect. lib. xlviii. Tit. 10. § 1.) “qui judicem corruperit, “vel corrumpendum curaverit hac lege teneatur.” This clause, however, we learn from Cicero, was restricted to magistrates and senators; and as Cluentius was only of the equestrian order, he was not, even supposing him guilty, within the law. Of this Cicero avails himself doubly; and as he shows here the most masterly address, I shall give a summary of his pleading on this part of the cause: “You,” says he to the advocate for the prosecutor, “you, T. Attius, I “know, had every where given it out, that “I was to defend my client, not from facts, “not upon the footing of innocence, but by “taking advantage merely of the law in his “behalf. Have I done so? I appeal to yourself.

“ Have I fought to cover him behind a legal
“ defence only? On the contrary, have I not
“ pleaded his cause as if he had been a senator,
“ liable, by the Cornelian law, to be capitally
“ convicted; and shown, that neither proof nor
“ probable presumption lies against his innocence?
“ In doing so, I must acquaint you, that I have
“ complied with the desire of Cluentius himself.
“ For when he first consulted me in this cause,
“ and when I informed him that it was clear
“ no action could be brought against him from
“ the Cornelian law, he instantly besought and
“ obtested me, that I would not rest his defence
“ upon that ground; saying, with tears in his
“ eyes, that his reputation was as dear to him
“ as his life; and that what he fought, as an
“ innocent man, was not only to be absolved
“ from any penalty, but to be acquitted in the
“ opinion of all his fellow-citizens.

“ Hitherto, then, I have pleaded this cause
“ upon his plan. But my client must forgive
“ me, if now I shall plead it upon my own.
“ For I should be wanting to myself, and to
“ that regard which my character and station
“ require me to bear to the laws of the state,
“ if I should allow any person to be judged
“ by a law which does not bind him. You,
“ Attius, indeed, have told us, that it was a
“ scandal and reproach, that a Roman knight
“ should be exempted from those penalties to
“ which a senator, for corrupting judges, is
“ liable. But I must tell you, that it would be a

“ much greater reproach, in a state that is regu-
“ lated by law, to depart from the law. What
“ safety have any of us in our persons, what
“ security for our rights, if the law shall be set
“ aside? By what title do you, Q. Nafō, sit
“ in that chair, and preside in this judgment?
“ By what right, T. Attius, do you accuse,
“ or do I defend? Whence all the solemnity
“ and pomp of judges, and clerks, and officers,
“ of which this house is full? Does not all
“ proceed from the law, which regulates the
“ whole department of the state; which, as a
“ common bond, holds its members together;
“ and, like the soul within the body, actuates
“ and directs all public functions*? On what
“ ground, then, dare you speak lightly of the
“ law, or move that, in a criminal trial, judges
“ should advance one step beyond what it permits

* “ Ait Attius, indignum esse facinus, si senator iudicio
“ quemquam circumvenerit, eum legibus teneri; si eques
“ Romanus hoc idem fecerit, eum non teneri. Ut tibi conce-
“ dam hoc indignum esse, tu mihi concedas necesse est multo
“ esse indignius, in ea civitate quæ legibus contineatur, discedi
“ legibus. Hoc nam vinculum est hujus dignitatis qua frui-
“ mur in republica; hoc fundamentum libertatis; hic fons
“ equitatis: mens & animus, & consilium, & sententia civi-
“ tatis posita est in legibus. Ut corpora nostra sine mente,
“ sic civitas sine lege, suis partibus, ut nervis ac sanguine &
“ membris, uti non potest. Legum ministri, magistratus;
“ legum interpretes, iudices; legum denique idcirco omnes
“ sumus servi, ut liberi esse possimus. Quid est, Q. Nafō,
“ cur tu in hoc loco fideas? &c.”

“ them to go? The wisdom of our ancestors has
“ found, that, as senators and magistrates enjoy
“ higher dignities, and greater advantages than
“ other members of the state, the law should
“ also, with regard to them, be more strict,
“ and the purity and uncorruptedness of their
“ morals be guarded by more severe sanctions.
“ But if it be your pleasure that this institution
“ should be altered, if you wish to have the
“ Cornelian law, concerning bribery extended
“ to all ranks, then let us join, not in violating
“ the law, but in proposing to have this alteration
“ made by a new law. My client, Cluentius,
“ will be the foremost in this measure, who now,
“ while the old law subsists, rejected its defence,
“ and required his cause to be pleaded, as if he
“ had been bound by it. But, though he would
“ not avail himself of the law, you are bound
“ in justice not to stretch it beyond its proper
“ limit.”

Such is the reasoning of Cicero on this head; eloquent, surely, and strong. As his manner is diffuse, I have greatly abridged it from the original, but have endeavoured to retain its force.

In the latter part of the oration, Cicero treats of the other accusation that was brought against Cluentius, of having poisoned Oppianicus. On this, it appears, his accusers themselves laid small stress; having placed their chief hope in overwhelming Cluentius with the odium of bribery in the former trial; and, therefore, on this part of the cause, Cicero does not dwell long. He

shows the improbability of the whole tale, which they related concerning this pretended poisoning, and makes it appear to be altogether destitute of any shadow of proof.

Nothing, therefore, remains but the peroration, or conclusion of the whole. In this, as indeed throughout the whole of this oration, Cicero is uncommonly chaste, and in the midst of much warmth and earnestness, keeps clear of turgid declamation. The peroration turns on two points; the indignation which the character and conduct of Saffia ought to excite, and the compassion due to a son, persecuted through his whole life by such a mother. He recapitulates the crimes of Saffia; her lewdness, her violation of every decorum, her incestuous marriages, her violence and cruelty. He places, in the most odious light, the eagerness and fury which she had shown in the suit she was carrying on against her son; describes her journey from Larinum to Rome, with a train of attendants, and a great store of money, that she might employ every method for circumvening and oppressing him in this trial; while, in the whole course of her journey, she was so detested, as to make a solitude wherever she lodged; she was shunned and avoided by all; her company and her very looks, were reckoned contagious; the house was deemed polluted which was entered into by so abandoned a woman *. To this he opposes the character of

* "Cum appropinquare hujus judicium ei nunciatum est,

Cluentius, fair, unspotted, and respectable. He produces the testimonies of the magistrates of Larinum in his favor, given in the most ample and honorable manner by a public decree, and supported by a great concourse of the most noted inhabitants, who were now present, to second every thing that Cicero could say in favor of Cluentius.

“ Therefore, judges,” he concludes, “ if
 “ you abominate crimes, stop the triumph of
 “ this impious woman, prevent this most unna-
 “ tural mother from rejoicing in her son’s blood.
 “ If you love virtue and worth, relieve this
 “ unfortunate man, who, for so many years,
 “ has been exposed to the most unjust reproach
 “ through the calumnies raised against him by
 “ Saffia, Oppianicus, and all their adherents.

“ confestim hic advolavit; ne aut accusatoribus diligentia,
 “ aut pecunia testibus deesset; aut ne forte mater hoc sibi
 “ optatissimum spectaculum hujus sordium atque luctus, &
 “ tanti squaloris amitteret. Jam vero quod iter Romam hujus
 “ mulieris fuisse existimatis? Quod ego propter vicinitatem
 “ Aquinatium & Venafranorum ex multis comperi: quos con-
 “ cursus in his oppidis? Quantos & virorum & mulierum
 “ gemitus esse factos? Mulierem quandam Larino, atque illam
 “ usque a mari supero Romam proficisci cum magno comi-
 “ tatu & pecunia, quo facilius circumvenire judicio capitis,
 “ atque opprimere filium possit. Nemo erat illorum, pœne
 “ dicam, quin expiandum illum locum esse arbitraretur qua-
 “ cunque illa iter fecisset; nemo, quin terram ipsam violari,
 “ quæ mater est omnium, vestigiis consceleratae matris putaret.
 “ Itaque nullo in oppido consistendi ei potestas fuit; nemo
 “ ex tot hospitibus inventus est qui non contagionem aspectus
 “ fugeret.”

“ Better far it had been for him to have ended
 “ his days at once by the poison which Op-
 “ pianicus had prepared for him, than to have
 “ escaped those snares, if he must still be op-
 “ pressed by an odium which I have shown to be
 “ so unjust. But in you he trusts, in your cle-
 “ mency, and your equity that now, on a full
 “ and fair hearing of his cause, you will restore
 “ him to his honor; you will restore him to his
 “ friends and fellow-citizens, of whose zeal and
 “ high estimation of him you have seen such
 “ strong proofs; and will show, by your deci-
 “ sion, that, though faction and calumny may
 “ reign for a while in popular meetings and
 “ harangues, in trial and judgment regard is
 “ paid to the truth only.”

I have given only a skeleton of this oration
 of Cicero. What I have principally aimed at,
 was to show his disposition and method; his ar-
 rangement of facts, and the conduct and force
 of some of his main arguments. But, in order
 to have a full view of the subject, and of the art
 with which the orator manages it, recourse must
 be had to the original. Few of Cicero's orations
 contain a greater variety of facts and argumenta-
 tions, which renders it difficult to analyze it fully.
 But for this reason I chose it, as an excellent ex-
 ample of managing at the bar a complex and
 intricate cause, with order, elegance, and force.

LECTURE XXIX.

Eloquence of the Pulpit.

BEFORE treating of the structure and component parts of a regular oration, I purposed making some observations on the peculiar strain, the distinguishing characters, of each of the three great kinds of public speaking. I have already treated of the eloquence of popular assemblies, and of the eloquence of the bar. The subject which remains for this lecture is, the strain and spirit of that eloquence which is suited to the pulpit.

Let us begin with considering the advantages, and disadvantages, which belong to this field of public speaking. The pulpit has plainly several advantages peculiar to itself. The dignity and importance of its subjects must be acknowledged superior to any other. They are such as ought to interest every one, and can be brought home to every man's heart; and such as admit, at the same time, both the highest embellishment in describing, and the greatest vehemence and warmth in enforcing them. The preacher has

also great advantages in treating his subjects. He speaks not to one or a few judges, but to a large assembly. He is secure from all interruption. He is obliged to no replies, or extemporaneous efforts. He chuses his theme at leisure; and comes to the public with all the assistance which the most accurate premeditation can give him.

But, together with these advantages, there are also peculiar difficulties that attend the eloquence of the pulpit. The preacher, it is true, has no trouble in contending with an adversary; but then, debate and contention enliven the genius of men, and procure attention. The pulpit-orator is, perhaps, in too quiet possession of his field. His subjects of discourse are, in themselves, noble and important; but they are subjects trite and familiar. They have, for ages, employed so many speakers, and so many pens; the public ear is so much accustomed to them, that it requires more than an ordinary power of genius to fix attention. Nothing within the reach of art is more difficult, than to bestow, on what is common, the grace of novelty. No sort of composition whatever is such a trial of skill, as where the merit of it lies wholly in the execution; not in giving any information that is new, not in convincing men of what they did not believe; but in dressing truths which they knew, and of which they were before convinced, in such colors as may most forcibly affect their imagination and heart *. It is to be considered

* What I have said on this subject, coincides very much

too, that the subject of the preacher generally confines him to abstract qualities, to virtues and vices; whereas, that of other popular speakers leads them to treat of persons; which is a subject that commonly interests the hearers more, and takes faster hold of the imagination. The preacher's business is solely to make you detest the crime. The pleader's, to make you detest the

with the observations made by the famous M. Bruyere, in his *Mœurs de ce Siècle*, when he is comparing the eloquence of the pulpit with that of the bar. "L'éloquence de la
 " chaire, en ce qui y entre d'humain, & du talent de l'ora-
 " teur, est cachée, connue de peu de personnes, & d'une
 " difficile exécution. Il faut marcher par des chemins battus,
 " dire ce qui a été dit, & ce que l'on prévoit que vous allez
 " dire: les matières sont grandes, mais usées & triviales; les
 " principes sûrs, mais dont les auditeurs pénètrent les conclu-
 " sions d'une seule vue; il y entre des sujets qui sont sub-
 " limes, mais qui peut traiter le sublime? — Le prédicateur
 " n'est point soutenu comme l'avocat par des faits toujours
 " nouveaux, par de différens événemens, par des aventures
 " inouïes; il ne s'exerce point sur les questions douteuses; il
 " ne fait point valoir les violentes conjectures, & les pré-
 " somptions; toutes les choses, néanmoins, qui élèvent le
 " génie, lui donnent de la force, & de l'étendue, & contraig-
 " nent bien moins l'éloquence qu'elles ne la fixent, & la
 " dirigent. Il doit, au contraire, tirer son discours d'une
 " source commune, & où tout le monde puise; & s'il s'écarte
 " de ces lieux communs, il n'est plus populaire; il est abstrait
 " ou déclamateur." — The inference which he draws from
 these reflections is very just — "il est plus aisé de prêcher
 " que de plaider; mais plus difficile de bien prêcher que de
 " bien plaider." *Les Caractères, ou Mœurs de ce siècle*,
 p. 601.

the criminal. He describes a living person; and with more facility rouses your indignation. From these causes, it comes to pass, that though we have a great number of moderately good preachers, we have, however, so few that are singularly eminent. We are still far from perfection in the art of preaching; and perhaps there are few things, in which it is more difficult to excel*. The object, however, is noble, and worthy, upon many accounts, of being pursued with zeal.

It may perhaps occur to some, that preaching is no proper subject of the art of eloquence. This, it may be said, belongs only to human studies and inventions: but for the truths of

* What I say here, and in other passages, of our being far from perfection in the art of preaching, and of there being few who are singularly eminent in it, is to be always understood as referring to an ideal view of the perfection of this art, which none, perhaps, since the days of the apostles, ever did, or ever will, reach. But in that degree of the eloquence of the pulpit, which promotes, in a considerable measure, the great end of edification, and gives a just title to high reputation and esteem, there are many who hold a very honorable rank. I agree entirely in opinion with a candid judge (Dr. Campbell on Rhetoric, B. i. ch. 10.) who observes, that considering how rare the talent of eloquence is among men, and considering all the disadvantages under which preachers labor, particularly from the frequency of this exercise, joined with the other duties of their office, to which fixed pastors are obliged, there is more reason to wonder that we hear so many instructive, and even eloquent sermons, than that we hear so few.

religion, with the greater simplicity, and the less mixture of art they are set forth, they are likely to prove the more successful. This objection would have weight, if eloquence were, as the persons who make such an objection commonly take it to be, an ostentatious and deceitful art, the study of words and of plausibility only, calculated to please, and to tickle the ear. But against this idea of eloquence I have all along guarded. True eloquence is the art of placing truth in the most advantageous light for conviction and persuasion. This is what every good man who preaches the gospel not only may, but ought to have at heart. It is most intimately connected with the success of his ministry; and were it needful, as assuredly it is not, to reason any further on this head, we might refer to the discourses of the prophets and apostles, as models of the most sublime and persuasive eloquence, adapted both to the imagination and the passions of men.

An essential requisite, in order to preach well, is, to have a just, and, at the same time, a fixed and habitual view of the end of preaching. For in no art can any man execute well, who has not a just idea of the end and object of that art. The end of all preaching is, to persuade men to become good. Every sermon therefore should be a persuasive oration. Not but that the preacher is to instruct and to teach, to reason and argue. All persuasion, as I showed formerly, is to be founded on conviction. The understanding

must always be applied to in the first place, in order to make a lasting impression on the heart: and he who would work on men's passions, or influence their practice, without first giving them just principles, and enlightening their minds, is no better than a mere declaimer. He may raise transient emotions, or kindle a passing ardor; but can produce no solid or lasting effect. At the same time, it must be remembered, that all the preacher's instructions are to be of the practical kind; and that persuasion must ever be his ultimate object. It is not to discuss some abstruse point, that he ascends the pulpit. It is not to illustrate some metaphysical truth, or to inform men of something which they never heard before; but it is to make them better men; it is to give them, at once, clear views, and persuasive impressions of religious truth. The eloquence of the pulpit then, must be popular eloquence. One of the first qualities of preaching is to be popular; not in the sense of accommodation to the humors and prejudices of the people (which tends only to make a preacher contemptible), but, in the true sense of the word, calculated to make impression on the people; to strike and to seize their hearts. I scruple not therefore to assert, that the abstract and philosophical manner of preaching, however it may have sometimes been admired, is formed upon a very faulty idea, and deviates widely from the just plan of pulpit eloquence. Rational, indeed, a preacher ought always to be; he must give his audience

clear ideas on every subject, and entertain them with sense, not with sound; but to be an accurate reasoner will be small praise, if he be not a persuasive speaker also.

Now, if this be the proper idea of a sermon, a persuasive oration, one very material consequence follows, that the preacher himself, in order to be successful, must be a good man. In a preceding lecture, I endeavoured to show, that on no subject can any man be truly eloquent, who does not utter the "*veræ voces ab imo pectore*," who does not speak the language of his own conviction, and his own feelings. If this holds, as, in my opinion, it does in other kinds of public speaking, it certainly holds in the highest degree in preaching. There, it is of the utmost consequence that the speaker firmly believe both the truth, and the importance of those principles which he inculcates on others; and, not only that he believe them speculatively, but have a lively and serious feeling of them. This will always give an earnestness and strength, a fervor of piety to his exhortations, superior in its effects to all the arts of studied eloquence; and, without it, the assistance of art will seldom be able to conceal the mere declaimer. A spirit of true piety would prove the most effectual guard against those errors which preachers are apt to commit. It would make their discourses solid, cogent, and useful; it would prevent those frivolous and ostentatious harangues, which have no other aim than merely to make a parade

of speech, or amuse an audience; and perhaps the difficulty of attaining that pitch of habitual piety and goodness, which the perfection of pulpit eloquence would require, and of uniting it with that thorough knowledge of the world, and those other talents which are requisite for excelling in the pulpit, is one of the great causes why so few arrive at very high eminence in this sphere.

The chief characteristics of the eloquence suited to the pulpit, as distinguished from the other kinds of public speaking, appear to me to be these two, gravity and warmth. The serious nature of the subjects belonging to the pulpit, requires gravity; their importance to mankind, requires warmth. It is far from being either easy or common to unite these characters of eloquence. The grave, when it is predominant, is apt to run into a dull uniform solemnity. The warm, when it wants gravity, borders on the theatrical and light. The union of the two must be studied by all preachers as of the utmost consequence, both in the composition of their discourses, and in their manner of delivery. Gravity and warmth united, form that character of preaching which the French call *onction*; the affecting, penetrating, interesting manner, flowing from a strong sensibility of heart in the preacher to the importance of those truths which he delivers, and an earnest desire that they may make full impression on the hearts of his hearers.

Next to a just idea of the nature and object of pulpit eloquence, the point of greatest importance to a preacher, is a proper choice of the subjects on which he preaches. To give rules for the choice of subjects for sermons, belongs to the theological more than to the rhetorical chair; only in general, they should be such as appear to the preacher to be the most useful, and the best accommodated to the circumstances of his audience. No man can be called eloquent, who speaks to an assembly on subjects, or in a strain, which none or few of them comprehend. The unmeaning applause which the ignorant give to what is above their capacity, common sense, and common probity, must teach every man to despise. Usefulness and true eloquence always go together; and no man can long be reputed a good preacher who is not acknowledged to be an useful one.

The rules which relate to the conduct of the different parts of a sermon, the introduction, division, argumentative and pathetic parts, I reserve to be afterwards delivered, when treating of the conduct of a discourse in general; but some rules and observations, which respect a sermon as a particular species of composition, I shall now give, and I hope they may be of some use.

The first which I shall mention is, to attend to the unity of a sermon. Unity indeed is of great consequence in every composition; but in other discourses, where the choice and direction of the subject are not left to the speaker, it may

be less in his power to preserve it. In a sermon, it must be always the preacher's own fault if he transgress it. What I mean by unity is, that there should be some one main point to which the whole strain of the sermon shall refer. It must not be a bundle of different subjects strung together, but one object must predominate throughout. This rule is founded on what we call experience, that the mind can attend fully only to one capital object at a time. By dividing, you always weaken the impression. Now this unity, without which no sermon can either have much beauty, or much force, does not require that there should be no divisions or separate heads in the discourse, or that one single thought only should be, again and again, turned up to the hearers in different lights. It is not to be understood in so narrow a sense: it admits of some variety; it admits of underparts and appendages, provided always that so much union and connexion be preserved, as to make the whole concur in some one impression upon the mind. I may employ, for instance, several different arguments to enforce the love of God; I may also inquire, perhaps, into the causes of the decay of this virtue; still one great object is presented to the mind; but if, because my text says, "He that loveth God, must love his brother also," I should, therefore, mingle, in one discourse arguments for the love of God and for the love of our neighbour, I would offend unpardonably against unity, and leave a

very loose and confused impression on the hearers' minds.

In the second place, sermons are always the more striking, and commonly the more useful, the more precise and particular the subject of them be. This follows, in a great measure, from what I was just now illustrating. Though a general subject is capable of being conducted with a considerable degree of unity, yet that unity can never be so complete as in a particular one. The impression made must always be more undeterminate; and the instruction conveyed, will commonly too, be less direct and convincing. General subjects, indeed, such as the excellency or the pleasures of religion, are often chosen by young preachers, as the most showy, and the easiest to be handled; and, doubtless, general views of religion are not to be neglected, as on several occasions they have great propriety. But these are not the subjects most favorable for producing the high effects of preaching. They fall in almost unavoidably with the beaten tract of common-place thought. Attention is much more commanded by seizing some particular view of a great subject, some single interesting topic, and directing to that point the whole force of argument and eloquence. To recommend some one grace or virtue, or to inveigh against a particular vice, furnishes a subject not deficient in unity or precision; but if we confine ourselves to that virtue or vice as assuming a particular aspect, and consider it as it appears in certain characters,

or affects certain situations in life, the subject becomes still more interesting. The execution is, I admit, more difficult, but the merit and the effect are higher.

In the third place, never study to say all that can be said upon a subject; no error is greater than this. Select the most useful, the most striking and persuasive topics which the text suggests, and rest the discourse upon these. If the doctrines which ministers of the gospel preach were altogether new to their hearers, it might be requisite for them to be exceeding full on every particular, lest there should be any hazard of their not affording complete information. But it is much less for the sake of information than of persuasion, that discourses are delivered from the pulpit; and nothing is more opposite to persuasion, than an unnecessary and tedious fulness. There are always some things which the preacher may suppose to be known, and some things which he may only shortly touch. If he seek to omit nothing which his subject suggests, it will unavoidably happen that he will encumber it, and weaken its force.

In studying a sermon, he ought to place himself in the situation of a serious hearer. Let him suppose the subject addressed to himself: let him consider what views of it would strike him most; what arguments would be most likely to persuade him; what parts of it would dwell most upon his mind. Let these be employed as his principal materials; and in these, it is most likely his

genius will exert itself with the greatest vigor. The spinning and wire-drawing mode, which is not uncommon among preachers, enervates the noblest truths. It may indeed be a consequence of observing the rule which I am now giving, that fewer sermons will be preached upon one text than is sometimes done; but this will, in my opinion, be attended with no disadvantage. I know no benefit that arises from introducing a whole system of religious truth under every text. The simplest and most natural method by far, is to chuse that view of a subject to which the text principally leads, and to dwell no longer on the text, than is sufficient for discussing the subject in that view, which can commonly be done, with sufficient profoundness and distinctness, in one or a few discourses: for it is a very false notion to imagine, that they always preach the most profoundly, or go the deepest into a subject, who dwell on it the longest. On the contrary, that tedious circuit, which some are ready to take in all their illustrations, is very frequently owing, either to their want of discernment for perceiving what is most important in the subject, or to their want of ability for placing it in the most proper point of view.

In the fourth place, study above all things to render your instructions interesting to the hearers. This is the great trial and mark of true genius for the eloquence of the pulpit: for nothing is so fatal to success in preaching, as a dry manner. A dry sermon can never be a good one.

In order to preach in an interesting manner, much will depend upon the delivery of a discourse; for the manner in which a man speaks, is of the utmost consequence for affecting his audience; but much will also depend on the composition of the discourse. Correct language, and elegant description, are but the secondary instruments of preaching in an interesting manner. The great secret lies, in bringing home all that is spoken to the hearts of the hearers, so as to make every man think that the preacher is addressing him in particular. For this end, let him avoid all intricate reasonings; avoid expressing himself in general speculative propositions, or laying down practical truths in an abstract metaphysical manner. As much as possible, the discourse ought to be carried on in the strain of direct address to the audience; not in the strain of one writing an essay, but of one speaking to a multitude, and studying to mix what is called application, or what has an immediate reference to practice, with the doctrinal and didactic parts of the sermon.

It will be of much advantage to keep always in view the different ages, characters, and conditions of men, and to accommodate directions and exhortations to these different classes of hearers. Whenever you bring forth what a man feels to touch his own character, or to suit his own circumstances, you are sure of interesting him. No study is more necessary for this purpose, than the study of human life, and

the human heart. To be able to unfold the heart, and to discover a man to himself, in a light in which he never saw his own character before, produces a wonderful effect. As long as the preacher hovers in a cloud of general observations, and descends not to trace the particular lines and features of manners, the audience are apt to think themselves unconcerned in the description. It is the striking accuracy of moral characters that gives the chief power and effect to a preacher's discourse. Hence, examples founded on historical facts, and drawn from real life, of which kind the scriptures afford many, always, when they are well chosen, command high attention. No favorable opportunity of introducing these should be omitted. They correct, in some degree, that disadvantage to which I before observed preaching is subject, of being confined to treat of qualities in the abstract, not of persons, and place the weight and reality of religious truths in the most convincing light. Perhaps the most beautiful, and among the most useful sermons of any, though, indeed the most difficult in composition, are such as are wholly characteristical, or founded on the illustration of some peculiar character, or remarkable piece of history, in the sacred writings; by pursuing which, one can trace, and lay open, some of the most secret windings of man's heart. Other topics of preaching have been much beaten; but this is a field, which, wide in itself, has hitherto been little explored by the composers of sermons, and possesses all the advantages of being

curious, new, and highly useful. Bishop Butler's sermon on the *character of Balaam*, will give an idea of that sort of preaching which I have in my eye.

In the fifth and last place, let me add a caution against taking the model of preaching from particular fashions that chance to have the vogue. These are torrents that swell to day, and have spent themselves by to-morrow. Sometimes it is the taste of poetical preaching, sometimes of philosophical, that has the fashion on its side; at one time it must be all pathetic, at another time all argumentative, according as some celebrated preacher has set the example. Each of these modes, in the extreme, is very faulty; and he who conforms himself to it, will both cramp genius, and corrupt it. It is the universal taste of mankind which is subject to no such changing modes, that alone is entitled to possess any authority; and this will never give its sanction to any strain of preaching, but what is founded on human nature, connected with usefulness, adapted to the proper idea of a sermon; as a serious persuasive oration, delivered to a multitude, in order to make them better men. Let a preacher form himself upon this standard, and keep it close in his eye, and he will be in a much surer road to reputation, and success at last, than by a servile compliance with any popular taste, or transient humor of his hearers. Truth and good sense are firm, and will establish themselves; mode and humor are feeble and fluctuating. Let him never follow, implicitly, any one example; or become a servile

imitator of any preacher, however much admired. From various examples, he may pick up much for his improvement; some he may prefer to the rest: but the servility of imitation extinguishes all genius, or rather is a proof of the entire want of genius.

With respect to style, that which the pulpit requires: must certainly, in the first place, be very perspicuous. As discourses spoken there, are calculated for the instruction of all sorts of hearers, plainness and simplicity should reign in them. All unusual, swoln, or high sounding words, should be avoided; especially all words that are merely poetical, or merely philosophical. Young preachers are apt to be caught with the glare of these; and in young composers the error may be excusable; but they may be assured that it is an error, and proceeds from their not having yet acquired a correct taste. Dignity of expression, indeed, the pulpit requires in a high degree; nothing that is mean or groveling, no low or vulgar phrases, ought on any account to be admitted. But this dignity is perfectly consistent with simplicity. The words employed may be all plain words, easily understood, and in common use; and yet the style may be abundantly dignified, and, at the same time, very lively and animated. For a lively animated style is extremely suited to the pulpit. The earnestness which a preacher ought to feel, and the grandeur and importance of his subjects, justify, and often require warm and glowing expressions. He not only may employ metaphors and

comparisons, but, on proper occasions, may apostrophize the saint or the sinner; may personify inanimate objects, break out into bold exclamations, and, in general, has the command of the most passionate figures of speech. But on this subject, of the proper use and management of figures, I have insisted so fully in former lectures, that I have no occasion now to give particular directions; unless it be only to recal to mind that most capital rule, never to employ strong figures, or a pathetic style, except in cases where the subject leads to them, and where the speaker is impelled to the use of them by native unaffected warmth.

The language of sacred scripture properly employed, is a great ornament to sermons. It may be employed, either in the way of quotation, or allusion. Direct quotations, brought from scripture, in order to support what the preacher inculcates, both give authority to his doctrine, and render his discourse more solemn and venerable. Allusions to remarkable passages, or expressions of scripture, when introduced with propriety, have generally a pleasing effect. They afford the preacher a fund of metaphorical expression which no other composition enjoys, and by means of which he can vary and enliven his style. But he must take care that any such allusions be natural and easy; for if they seem forced, they approach to the nature of conceits.*

* Bishop Sherlock, when showing, that the views of reason

In a sermon, no points or conceits should appear, no affected smartness and quaintness of expression. These derogate much from the dignity of the pulpit: and give to a preacher that air of foppishness, which he ought, above all things, to shun. It is rather a strong expressive style, than a sparkling one, that is to be studied. But we must beware of imagining, that we render style strong and expressive, by a constant and multiplied use of epithets. This is a great error. Epithets have often great beauty and force. But if we introduce them into every sentence, and string many of them together to one object, in place of strengthening, we

have been enlarged, and the principles of natural religion illustrated, by the discoveries of Christianity, attacks unbelievers for the abuse they make of these advantages, in the following manner: "What a return do we make for those
 " blessings we have received? How disrespectfully do we treat
 " the gospel of Christ, to which we owe that clear light both
 " of reason and nature, which we now enjoy, when we en-
 " deavour to set up reason and nature in opposition to it?
 " ought the *withered hand*, which Christ has restored and made
 " whole, to be lifted up against him?" Vol. i. Disc. i. This allusion to a noted miracle of our Lord's, appears to me happy and elegant. Dr. Seed is remarkably fond of allusions to scripture style; but he sometimes employs such as are too strained and fanciful. As when he says. (Serm. iv.) "No one great
 " virtue will come single; the virtues *that be her fellows will*
 " *bear her company with joy and gladness.*" Alluding to a passage in the XLVth. Psalm, which relates to the virgins, the companions of the king's daughter. And (Serm. xiii.) having said, that the universities have justly been called the eyes of the nation, he adds, "and *if the eyes of the nation be evil,*
 " *the whole body of it must be full of darkness.*",

we clog and enfeeble style; in place of illustrating the image, we render it confused and indistinct. He that tells me, “of this perishing, mutable and transitory world;” by all these three epithets, does not give me so strong an idea of what he would convey, as if he had used one of them with propriety. I conclude this head with an advice, never to have what may be called a favorite expression; for it shows affectation, and becomes disgusting. Let not any expression, which is remarkable for its lustre or beauty, occur twice in the same discourse. The repetition of it betrays a fondness to shine, and, at the same time, carries the appearance of barren invention.

As to the question, whether it be most proper to write sermons fully, and commit them accurately to memory, or to study only the matter and thoughts, and trust the expression, in part at least, to the delivery? I am of opinion, that no universal rule can here be given. The choice of either of these methods must be left to preachers, according to their different genius. The expressions which come warm and glowing from the mind, during the fervor of pronounciation, will often have a superior grace and energy, to those which are studied in the retirement of the closet. But then, this fluency and power of expression cannot, at all times, be depended upon, even by those of the readiest genius; and by many can at no time be commanded, when overawed by the presence of an audience. It is proper therefore to begin, at least, the practice of preaching,

with writing as accurately as possible. This is absolutely necessary in the beginning, in order to acquire the power and habit of correct speaking, nay also of correct thinking, upon religious subjects. I am inclined to go further, and to say, that it is proper not only to begin thus, but also to continue, as long as the habits of industry last, in the practice both of writing, and committing to memory. Relaxation in this particular is so common, and so ready to grow upon most speakers in the pulpit, that there is little occasion for giving any cautions against the extreme of overdoing in accuracy.

Of pronunciation or delivery, I am hereafter to treat apart. All that I shall now say upon this head is, that the practice of reading sermons, is one of the greatest obstacles to the eloquence of the pulpit in Great Britain, where alone this practice prevails. No discourse, which is designed to be persuasive, can have the same force when read, as when spoken. The common people all feel this, and their prejudice against this practice is not without foundation in nature. What is gained hereby in point of correctness, is not equal, I apprehend, to what is lost in point of persuasion and force. They, whose memories are not able to retain the whole of a discourse, might aid themselves considerably by short notes lying before them, which would allow them to preserve, in a great measure, the freedom and ease of one who speaks.

The French and English writers of sermons proceed upon very different ideas of the eloquence

of the pulpit, and seem indeed to have split it betwixt them. A French sermon, is for the most part a warm animated exhortation; an English one, is a piece of cool instructive reasoning. The French preachers address themselves chiefly to the imagination and the passions; the English, almost solely to the understanding. It is the union of these two kinds of composition, of the French earnestness and warmth, with the English accuracy and reason, that would form, according to my idea, the model of a perfect sermon. A French sermon would sound in our ears as a florid, and, often, as an enthusiastic, harangue. The censure which, in fact, the French critics pass on the English preachers is, that they are philosophers and logicians, but not orators *. The defects of most of the French sermons are these: from a mode that prevails among them of taking their texts from the lesson of the day, the connexion of the text with the subject is often unnatural and forced †; their applications of

* “ Les sermons sont suivant notre méthode, de vrais discours oratoires; & non pas, comme chez les Anglais, des discussions métaphysiques plus convenables à une académie; qu’aux assemblées populaires qui se forment dans nos temples, & qu’il s’agit d’instruire des devoirs du christianisme, d’encourager, de consoler, d’édifier.” *Rhétorique française*, par M. Crevier, Tome I. p. 134.

† One of Massillon’s best sermons, that on the coldness and languor with which Christians perform the duties of religion, is preached from Luke iv. 18. *And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon’s house; and Simon’s wife’s mother was taken ill with a great fever.*

scripture are fanciful rather than instructive; their method is stiff, and cramped, by their practice of dividing their subjects always either into three, or two, main points; and their composition is in general too diffuse, and consists rather of a very few thoughts spread out, and highly wrought up, than of a rich variety of sentiments. Admitting, however, all these defects, it cannot be denied, that their sermons are formed upon the idea of a persuasive popular oration; and therefore I am of opinion, they may be read with benefit.

Among the French Protestant divines, Saurin is the most distinguished: He is copious, eloquent, and devout, though too ostentatious in his manner. Among the Roman Catholics, the two most eminent, are Bourdaloue and Massillon. It is a subject of dispute among the French critics, to which of these the preference is due, and each of them have their several partisans. To Bourdaloue, they attribute more solidity and close reasoning; to Massillon, a more pleasing and engaging manner. Bourdaloue is indeed a great reasoner, and inculcates his doctrines with much zeal, piety, and earnestness; but his style is verbose, he is disagreeably full of quotations from the fathers, and he wants imagination. Massillon has more grace, more sentiment, and, in my opinion, every way more genius. He discovers much knowledge both of the world and of the human heart; he is pathetic and persuasive; and,

upon the whole, is perhaps, the most eloquent writer of sermons which modern times have produced *.

* In order to give an idea of that kind of eloquence which is employed by the French preachers, I shall insert a passage from Maffillon, which, in the Encyclopédie, (article Eloquence) is extolled by Voltaire, who was the author of that article, as a chef d'œuvre, equal to any thing of which either ancient or modern times can boast. The subject of the sermon is, the small number of those who shall be saved. The strain of the whole discourse is extremely serious and animated; but when the orator came to the passage which follows, Voltaire informs us, that the whole assembly were moved; that by a sort of involuntary motion, they started up from their seats, and that such murmurs of surprise and acclamations arose as disconcerted the speaker, though they increased the effect of his discourse.

“ Je m'arrête à vous, mes frères, qui êtes ici assemblés.
 “ Je ne parle plus du reste des hommes; je vous regarde
 “ comme si vous étiez seuls sur la terre; voici la pensée qui
 “ m'occupe & qui m'épouvante. Je suppose que c'est ici votre
 “ dernière heure, & la fin de l'univers; que les cieux vont
 “ s'ouvrir sur vos têtes, Jesus Christ paraître dans sa gloire
 “ au milieu de ce temple, & que vous n'y êtes assemblés
 “ que pour l'attendre, comme des criminels tremblans, à qui
 “ l'on va prononcer, ou une sentence de grace, ou un arrêt
 “ de mort éternelle. Car vous avez beau vous flatter; vous
 “ mourriez tels que vous êtes aujourd'hui. Tous ces desirs
 “ de changement qui vous amusent, vous amuseront jusqu'au
 “ lit de la mort; c'est l'expérience de tous les siècles. Tout
 “ ce que vous trouverez alors en vous de nouveau, fera peut-
 “ être un compte plus grand que celui que vous auriez au-
 “ jourd'hui à rendre; & sur ce que vous seriez, si l'on venait
 “ vous juger dans ce moment, vous pouvez presque décider de
 “ ce qui vous arrivera au sortir de la vie.

During the period that preceded the restoration of King Charles II. the sermons of the

“ Or, je vous le demande, & je vous le demande frappé
“ de terreur, ne séparant pas en ce point mon sort du vôtre,
“ & me mettant dans la même disposition, où je souhaite
“ que vous entriez; je vous demande, donc, si Jesus-Christ
“ paraissait dans ce temple, au milieu de cette assemblée, la
“ plus auguste de l’univers, pour nous juger, pour faire le
“ terrible discernement des boucs & des brebis, croyez-vous
“ que le plus grand nombre de tous ceux qui nous sommes
“ ici, fût placé à la droite? Croyez-vous que les choses du
“ moins fussent égales? croyez-vous qu’il s’y trouvât seule-
“ ment dix justes, que le Seigneur ne put trouver autrefois
“ en cinq villes toutes entières? Je vous le demande? vous
“ l’ignorez, & je l’ignore moi-même. Vous seul, ô mon
“ Dieu! connaissez ceux qui vous appartiennent. — Mes frè-
“ res, notre perte est presque assurée, & nous n’y pensons
“ pas. Quand même dans cette terrible séparation qui se fera
“ un jour, il ne devrait y avoir qu’un seul pécheur de cette
“ assemblée du côté des réprouvés, & qu’une voix du ciel
“ viendrait nous en assurer dans ce temple, sans le désigner;
“ qui de nous ne craindrait d’être le malheureux? qui de
“ nous ne retomberait d’abord, sur sa conscience, pour exa-
“ miner si ses crimes n’ont pas mérité ce châtiment? qui de
“ nous, saisi de frayeur, ne demanderait pas à Jesus-Christ,
“ comme autrefois les apôtres: Seigneur, ne ferait-ce pas
“ moi? Sommes-nous sages, mes chers auditeurs? peut-être
“ que parmi tous ceux qui m’entendent, il ne se trouvera
“ pas dix justes; peut-être s’en trouvera-t-il encore moins.
“ Que fai-je, ô mon Dieu! je n’ose regarder d’un œil fixe
“ les abîmes de vos jugemens, & de votre justice; peut-être
“ ne s’en trouvera-t-il qu’un seul; & ce danger ne vous
“ touche point, mon cher auditeur? & vous croyez être ce
“ seul heureux dans le grand nombre qui périra? vous qui
“ avez moins sujet de le croire que tout autre; vous sur qui

English divines abounded with scholastic casuistical theology. They were full of minute divisions and subdivisions, and scraps of learning in the didactic part; but to these were joined very warm pathetic addresses to the consciences of the hearers, in the applicatory part of the sermon. Upon the restoration, preaching assumed a more correct and polished form. It became disencumbered from the pedantry, and scholastic divisions of the sectaries; but it threw out also their warm and pathetic addresses, and established itself wholly upon the model of cool reasoning, and rational instruction. As the dissenters from the church continued to preserve somewhat of the old strain of preaching, this led the established clergy to depart the farther from it. Whatever

“seul la sentence de mort devrait tomber. Grand Dieu! que
 “l'on connait peu dans le monde les terreurs de votre loi,
 “&c.” — After his awakening and alarming exhortation, the orator comes with propriety to this practical improvement:
 “Mais que conclure de ces grandes vérités? qu'il faut désespérer de son salut? à Dieu ne plaise; il n'y a que l'impie,
 “qui, pour se calmer sur ses désordres, tâche ici de conclure
 “en secret que tous les hommes périront comme lui; ce ne
 “doit pas être là le fruit de ce discours. Mais de vous détromper de cette erreur si universelle, qu'on peut faire ce
 “que tous les autres font; & que l'usage est une voie sûre;
 “mais de vous convaincre que pour se sauver, il faut se
 “distinguer des autres; être singulier, vivre à part au milieu
 “du monde, & ne pas ressembler à la foule.”

Sermons de MASSILLON. Vol. IV.

was earnest and passionate, either in the composition or delivery of sermons, was reckoned enthusiastic and fanatical; and hence that argumentative manner, bordering on the dry and unpersuasive, which is too generally the character of English sermons. Nothing can be more correct upon that model than many of them are; but the model itself on which they are formed, is a confined and imperfect one. Dr. Clark, for instance, every where abounds in good sense, and the most clear and accurate reasoning; his applications of scripture are pertinent; his style is always perspicuous, and often elegant; he instructs and he convinces; in what then is he deficient? In nothing, except in the power of interesting and seizing the heart. He shows you what you ought to do; but he excites not the desire of doing it: he treats man as if he were a being of pure intellect, without imagination or passions. Archbishop Tillotson's manner is more free and warm, and he approaches nearer than most of the English divines to the character of popular speaking. Hence he is, to this day, one of the best models we have for preaching. We must not indeed consider him in the light of a perfect orator: his composition is too loose and remiss; his style too feeble, and frequently too flat, to deserve that high character; but there is in some of his sermons so much warmth and earnestness, and through them all there runs so much ease and perspicuity, such a vein of good sense and

sincere piety, as justly entitle him to be held as eminent a preacher as England has produced.

In Dr. Barrow, one admires more the prodigious fecundity of his invention, and the uncommon strength and force of his conceptions, than the felicity of his execution, or his talent in composition. We see a genius far surpassing the common, peculiar indeed almost to himself; but that genius often shooting wild, and unchastised by any discipline or study of eloquence.

I cannot attempt to give particular characters of that great number of writers of sermons which this, and the former age, have produced, among whom we meet with a variety of the most respectable names. We find in their composition much that deserves praise; a great display of abilities of different kinds, much good sense and piety, sound divinity and useful instruction; though in general the degree of eloquence bears not, perhaps, equal proportion to the goodness of the matter. Bishop Atterbury deserves being particularly mentioned as a model of correct and beautiful style, besides having the merit of a warmer and more eloquent strain of writing, in some of his sermons, than is commonly met with. Had Bishop Butler, in place of abstract philosophical essays, given us more sermons, in the strain of those two excellent ones which he has composed upon self-deceit, and upon the character of Balaam, we would then have pointed him out as distinguished for that species of characteristical sermons which I before recommended.

Though the writings of the English divines are very proper to be read by such as are designed for the church, I must caution them against making too much use of them, or transcribing large passages from them into the sermons they compose. Such as once indulge themselves in this practice, will never have any fund of their own. Infinitely better it is, to venture into the public with thoughts and expressions which have occurred to themselves, though of inferior beauty, than to disfigure their compositions, by borrowed, and ill-sorted ornaments, which, to a judicious eye, will be always in hazard of discovering their own poverty. When a preacher sits down to write on any subject, never let him begin with seeking to consult all who have written on the same text, or subject. This, if he consult many, will throw perplexity and confusion into his ideas; and, if he consults only one, will often warp him insensibly into his method, whether it be right or not. But let him begin with pondering the subject on his own thoughts; let him endeavour to fetch materials from within; to collect and arrange his ideas; and form some sort of plan to himself; which it is always proper to put down in writing. Then, and not till then, he may inquire how others have treated the same subject. By this means, the method, and the leading thoughts in the sermon are likely to be his own. These thoughts he may improve, by comparing them with the tract of sentiment which others have pursued; some of their sense he may without

blame, incorporate into his composition; retaining always his own words and style. This is fair assistance: all beyond is plagiarism.

On the whole, never let the principle, with which we set out at first, be forgotten, to keep close in view, the great end for which a preacher mounts the pulpit; even to infuse good dispositions into his hearers, to persuade them to serve God, and to become better men. Let this always dwell on his mind when he is composing, and it will diffuse through his compositions, that spirit which will render them at once esteemed, and useful. The most useful preacher is always the best, and will not fail of being esteemed so. Embellish truth only, with a view to gain it the more full and free admission into your hearers' minds; and your ornaments will, in that case, be simple, masculine, and natural. The best applause by far, which a preacher can receive, arises from the serious and deep impressions which his discourse leaves on those who hear it. The finest encomium, perhaps, ever bestowed on a preacher, was given by Louis XIV. to the eloquent Bishop of Clermont, Father Massillon, whom I before mentioned with so much praise. After hearing him preach at Versailles, he said to him, "Father, I have heard
" many great orators in this chapel; I have been
" highly pleased with them; but for you, whenever
" I hear you, I go away displeased with myself;
" for I see more of my own character."

LECTURE XXX.

Critical Examination of a Sermon of Bishop Atterbury's.

THE last lecture was employed in observations on the peculiar and distinguishing characters of the eloquence proper for the pulpit. But as rules and directions, when delivered in the abstract, are never so useful as when they are illustrated by particular instances, it may, perhaps, be of some benefit to those who are designed for the church, that I should analyze an English sermon, and consider the matter of it, together with the manner. For this purpose I have chosen Bishop Atterbury as my example, who is deservedly accounted one of our most eloquent writers of sermons, and whom I mentioned as such in the last lecture. At the same time, he is more distinguished for elegance and purity of expression, than for profoundness of thought. His style, though sometimes careless, is, upon the whole, neat and chaste; and more beautiful than that of most writers of sermons. In his sentiments he is not only rational; but pious and devotional, which is a great excellency. The sermon which I

have singled out, is, that upon praise and thanksgiving, the first sermon of the first volume, which is reckoned one of his best. In examining it, it is necessary that I should use full liberty, and, together with the beauties, point out any defects that occur to me in the matter, as well as in the style.

PSALM l. 14. *Offer unto God thanksgiving.*

“ Among the many excellencies of this pious
 “ collection of hymns, for which so particular a
 “ value hath been set upon it by the church of
 “ God in all ages, this is not the least, that the
 “ true price of duties is there justly stated; men
 “ are called off from resting in the outward show
 “ of religion, in ceremonies and ritual observan-
 “ ces; and taught, rather to practise (that which
 “ was shadowed out by these rites, and to which
 “ they are designed to lead) sound inward piety
 “ and virtue.

“ The several composers of these hymns were
 “ *prophets*; persons, whose business it was not
 “ only to foretel events, for the benefit of the
 “ church in succeeding times, but to correct and
 “ reform also what was amiss among that race of
 “ men, with whom they lived and conversed;
 “ to preserve a foolish people from idolatry, and
 “ false worship; to rescue the law from corrupt
 “ glosses, and superstitious abuses; and to put
 “ men in mind of (what they are so willing to
 “ forget) that eternal and invariable rule, which
 “ was before these *positive* duties, would continue

“ after them, and was to be observed, even then,
“ in preference to them.

“ The discharge, I say, of this part of the
“ prophetic office taking up so much room in
“ the book of *Psalms*; this hath been one reason,
“ among many others, why they have always
“ been so highly esteemed; because we are from
“ hence furnished with a proper reply to an ar-
“ gument commonly made use of by unbelievers,
“ who look upon all revealed religions as pious
“ frauds and impostures, on account of the pre-
“ judices they have entertained in relation to
“ that of the *Jews*; the whole of which they
“ first suppose to lie in external performances,
“ and then easily persuade themselves, that God
“ could never be the author of such a mere piece
“ of pageantry and empty formality, nor delight
“ in a worship which consisted purely in a number
“ of odd unaccountable ceremonies. Which ob-
“ jection of theirs, we should not be able tho-
“ roughly to answer, unless we could prove
“ (chiefly out of the *Psalms*, and other parts
“ of the prophetic writings) that the Jewish re-
“ ligion was somewhat more than bare outside
“ and show, and that inward purity, and the
“ devotion of the heart, was a duty then, as
“ well as now.”

This appears to me an excellent introduction.
The thought on which it rests is solid and judi-
cious; that in the book of *Psalms*, the attention
of men is called to the moral and spiritual part
of religion; and the Jewish dispensation thereby

vindicated from the suspicion of requiring nothing more from its votaries, than the observance of the external rites and ceremonies of the law. Such views of religion are proper to be often displayed; and deserve to be insisted on, by all who wish to render preaching conducive to the great purpose of promoting righteousness and virtue. The style, as far as we have gone, is not only free from faults, but elegant and happy.

It is a great beauty in an introduction, when it can be made to turn on some one thought, fully brought out and illustrated; especially, if that thought has a close connexion with the following discourse, and, at the same time, does not anticipate any thing that is afterwards to be introduced in a more proper place. This introduction of Atterbury's has all these advantages. The encomium which he makes on the strain of David's Psalms, is not such as might as well have been prefixed to any other discourse, the text of which was taken from any of the Psalms. Had this been the case, the introduction would have lost much of its beauty. We shall see from what follows, how naturally the introductory thought connects with his text, and how happily it ushers it in.

“ One great instance of this proof, we have
 “ in the words now before us; which are taken
 “ from a Psalm of *Asaph*, written on purpose
 “ to set out the weakness and worthlessness of
 “ external performances, when compared with

“ more substantial and vital duties. To enforce
“ which doctrine, God himself is brought in as
“ delivering it. *Hear O my people, and I will*
“ *speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee:*
“ *I am God, even thy God.* The preface is very
“ solemn, and therefore what it ushers in, we
“ may be sure is of no common importance; *I*
“ *will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt*
“ *offerings, to have been continually before me.*
“ That is, I will not so reprove thee for any fai-
“ lures in thy sacrifices and burnt-offerings, as if
“ these were the only, or the chief things I requir-
“ ed of thee. *I will take no bullock out of thy*
“ *house, nor he-goat out of thy folds; I prescribed*
“ not sacrifices to thee for my own sake, because
“ I needed them; *for every beast of the forest is*
“ *mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills.* Mine
“ they are, and were, before I commanded thee
“ to offer them to me; so that, as it follows,
“ *If I were hungry, yet would I not tell thee, for*
“ *the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.* But
“ can ye be so gross and senseless, as to think
“ me liable to hunger and thirst? as to imagine
“ that wants of that kind can touch me? *Will*
“ *I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of*
“ *goats?* — Thus doth he expostulate severely
“ with them, after the most graceful manner of
“ the Eastern Poetry. The issue of which is a
“ plain and full resolution of the case, in those
“ few words of the text. — *Offer unto God thanks-*
“ *giving.* Would you do your homage the most
“ agreeable way? would you render the most
acceptable

“acceptable of services? *Offer unto God thanks-giving.*”

It is often a difficult matter to illustrate gracefully the text of a sermon from the context, and to point out the connexion between them. This is a part of the discourse which is apt to become dry and tedious, especially when pursued into a minute commentary. And therefore, except as far as such illustration from the context is necessary for explaining the meaning, or in cases where it serves to give dignity and force to the text, I would advise it to be always treated with brevity. Sometimes it may even be wholly omitted, and the text assumed merely as an independent proposition, if the connexion with the context be obscure, and would require a laborious explanation. In the present case, the illustration from the context is singularly happy. The passage of the Psalm on which it is founded is noble and spirited, and connected in such a manner with the text, as to introduce it with a very striking emphasis. On the language I have little to observe, except that the phrase, *one great instance of this proof*, is a clumsy expression. It was sufficient to have said, *one great proof*, or *one great instance*, of this. In the same sentence, when he speaks of *setting out the weakness and worthlessness of external performances*, we may observe, that the word *worthlessness*, as it is now commonly used, signifies more than the deficiency of worth, which is all that the author means. it generally imports, a considerable degree of badness

or blame. It would be more proper, therefore, to say, the *imperfection*, or the *insignificancy*, of external performances.

“ The use I intend to make of these words,
“ is, from hence to raise some thoughts about
“ that very excellent and important duty of
“ praise and thanksgiving, a subject not unfit
“ to be discoursed of at this time; whether we
“ consider, either the more than ordinary cold-
“ ness that appears of late in men’s tempers
“ towards the practice of this or any other part
“ of a warm and affecting devotion; the great
“ occasion of setting aside this particular day in
“ the calendar, some years ago; or the new
“ instances of mercy and goodness, which God
“ hath lately been pleased to bestow upon us;
“ answering at last the many *prayers* and *fastings*,
“ by which we have besought him so long for
“ the establishment of their Majesties throne, and
“ for the success of their arms; and giving us in
“ his good time, an opportunity of appearing
“ before him in the more delightful part of our
“ duty, *with the voice of joy and praise, with a*
“ *multitude that keep holidays.*”

In this paragraph there is nothing remarkable; no particular beauty or neatness of expression; and the sentence which it forms is long and tiresome — *to raise some thoughts about that very excellent, &c.* is rather loose and awkward; — better — *to recommend that very excellent, &c.* and when he mentions *setting aside* a particular day in the calendar, one would imagine, that *setting*

apart would have been more proper, as to *set aside*, seems rather to suggest a different idea.

“ *Offer unto God thanksgiving.* — Which that
 “ we may do, let us inquire first, how we are
 “ to *understand* this command of offering praise
 “ and thanksgiving unto God; and then, how
 “ *reasonable* it is that we should comply with it.”

This is the general division of the discourse. An excellent one it is, and corresponds to many subjects of this kind, where particular duties are to be treated of; first to explain, and then to recommend or enforce them. A division should always be simple and natural; and much depends on the proper view which it gives of the subject.

“ Our inquiry into what is meant here, will
 “ be very short; for who is there, that under-
 “ stands any thing of religion, but knows, that
 “ the offering praise and thanks to God, implies,
 “ our having a lively and devout sense of his ex-
 “ cellencies, and of his benefits; our recollecting
 “ them with humility and thankfulness of heart;
 “ and our expressing these inward affections by
 “ suitable outward signs, by reverent, and
 “ lowly postures of body, by songs and hymns,
 “ and spiritual ejaculations; either publicly or
 “ privately; either in the customary and daily
 “ service of the church, or in its more solemn
 “ assemblies, convened upon extraordinary occa-
 “ sions? This is the account which every Christian
 “ easily gives himself of it; and which therefore,
 “ it would be needless to enlarge upon. I shall
 “ only take notice upon this head, that praise

“ and thanksgiving do , in strictness of speech ,
“ signify things somewhat different. Our *praise*
“ properly terminates in God , on account of
“ his natural excellencies and perfections ; and
“ is that act of devotion , by which we confess
“ and admire his several attributes : but *thanksgiv-*
“ *ing* is a narrower duty , and imports only
“ a grateful sense and acknowledgment of past
“ mercies. We praise God for all his glorious
“ acts of every kind , that regard either us or
“ other men , for his very *vengeance* , and those
“ *judgments* which he sometimes sends *abroad on*
“ *the earth* ; but we thank him , properly speak-
“ ing , for the instances of his *goodness* alone ;
“ and for such only of these , as we ourselves
“ are someway concerned in. This, I say, is what
“ the two words strictly imply ; but since the
“ language of scripture is generally less exact and
“ useth either of them often to express the other
“ by , I shall not think myself obliged , in what
“ follows, thus nicely always to distinguish them.”

There was room here for insisting more fully on the nature of the duty, than the author has done under this head ; in particular, this was the place for correcting the mistake , to which men are always prone , of making thanksgiving to consist merely in outward expressions ; and for showing them , that the essence of the duty lies in the inward feelings of the heart. In general , it is of much use to give full and distinct explications of religious duties. But , as our author intended only one discourse on the subject, he

could not enlarge with equal fulness on every part of it; and he has chosen to dwell on that part, on which indeed it is most necessary to enlarge, the motives enforcing the duty. For, as it is an easier matter to know, than to practise duty, the persuasive part of the discourse is that to which the speaker should always bend his chief strength. The account given in this head, of the nature of praise and thanksgiving, though short, is yet comprehensive and distinct, and the language is smooth and elegant.

“ Now the great *reasonableness* of this duty of
 “ praise or thanksgiving, and our several *obligations*
 “ to it, will appear, if we either consider
 “ it *absolutely* in itself, as the debt of our natures;
 “ or *compare* it with other duties, and show the
 “ rank it bears among them; or set out, in the
 “ last place, some of its peculiar properties and
 “ *advantages*, with regard to the devout per-
 “ former of it.”

The author here enters upon the main part of his subject the reasonableness of the duty, and mentions three arguments for proving it. These are well stated, and are in themselves proper and weighty considerations. How far he has handled each of them to advantage, will appear as we proceed. I cannot, however, but think that he has omitted one very material part of the argument, which was to have shown the obligations we are under to this duty, from the various subjects of thanksgiving afforded us by the divine goodness. This would have led him to review the chief benefits

of creation, providence, and redemption: and certainly, they are these which lay the foundation of the whole argument for thanksgiving. The heart must first be affected with a suitable sense of the divine benefits, before one can be excited to praise God. If you would persuade me to be thankful to a benefactor, you must not employ such considerations merely as those upon which the author here rests, taken from gratitude's being the law of my nature, or bearing a high rank among moral duties, or being attended with peculiar advantages. These are considerations but of a secondary nature. You must begin with setting before me all that my friend has done for me, if you mean to touch my heart, and to call forth the emotions of gratitude. The case is perfectly similar, when we are exhorted to give thanks to God; and, therefore, in giving a full view of the subject, the blessings conferred on us by divine goodness should have been taken into the argument.

It may be said, however, in apology for our author, that this would have led him into too wide a field for one discourse, and into a field also, which is difficult, because so beaten, the enumeration of the divine benefits. He therefore seems to take it for granted, that we have upon our minds a just sense of these benefits. He assumes them as known and acknowledged; and setting aside what may be called the pathetic part of the subject, or what was calculated to warm the heart, he goes on to the reasoning part. In this management, I cannot altogether blame

him. I do not by any means say, that it is necessary in every discourse to take in all that belongs to the doctrine of which we treat. Many a discourse is spoiled, by attempting to render it too copious and comprehensive. The preacher may, without reprehension, take up any part of a great subject to which his genius at the time leads him, and make that his theme. But when he omits any thing which may be thought essential, he ought to give notice, that this is a part, which for the time he lays aside. Something of this sort, would perhaps have been proper here. Our author might have begun, by saying, that the reasonableness of this duty must appear to every thinking being, who reflects upon the infinite obligations which are laid upon us by creating, preserving, and redeeming love; and after taking notice that the field which these open, was too wide for him to enter upon at that time, have proceeded to his other heads. Let us now consider these separately.

“ The duty of praise and thanksgiving, considered *absolutely* in itself, is, I say, the debt and law of our nature. We had such faculties bestowed on us by our creator, as made us capable of satisfying this debt, and obeying this law; and they never, therefore, work more naturally and freely, than when they are thus employed.

“ ’Tis one of the earliest instructions given us by philosophy, and which hath ever since been approved and inculcated by the wisest men of all ages, that the original design of making man was, that he might praise and honor him

“ who made him. When God had finished this
“ goodly frame of things we call *the world*, and
“ put together the several parts of it, according
“ to his infinite wisdom, in exact number, weight,
“ and measure; there was still wanting a creature,
“ in these lower regions, that could apprehend
“ the beauty, order, and exquisite contrivance
“ of it; that from contemplating the gift, might
“ be able to raise itself to the great giver, and
“ do honor to all his attributes. Every thing in-
“ deed that God made, did, in some sense, glorify
“ its author, inasmuch as it carried upon it the
“ plain mark and impress of the Deity, and was
“ an effect worthy of that first cause from whence
“ it flowed; and thus might the *heavens* be said,
“ at the first moment in which they stood forth,
“ *to declare his glory, and the firmament to show*
“ *his handy work*: But this was an imperfect and
“ defective glory; the sign was of no signification
“ here below, whilst there was no one here as
“ yet to take notice of it. Man, therefore, was
“ formed to supply this want, endowed with
“ powers fit to find out, and to acknowledge
“ these unlimited perfections; and then put into
“ this temple of God, this lower world, as the
“ priest of nature, to offer up the incense of
“ thanks and praise for the mute and insensible
“ part of the creation.

“ This, I say, hath been the opinion all along of
“ the most thoughtful men, down from the most an-
“ cient times: and though it be not demonstrative,
“ yet it is what we cannot but judge highly reason-
“ able, if we do but allow, that man was made for

“ some end or other; and that he is capable of
 “ perceiving that end. For, then, let us search
 “ and inquire never so much, we shall find no
 “ other account of him that we can rest upon so
 “ well. If we say, that he was made purely for
 “ the good pleasure of God; this is, in effect, to
 “ say, that he was made for no determinate end;
 “ or for none, at least, that we can discern.
 “ If we say, that he was designed as an instance
 “ of the wisdom, and power, and goodness of
 “ God, this, indeed, may be the reason of his
 “ *being* in general; for ’tis the common reason of
 “ the being of every thing besides. But it gives
 “ no account, why he was made *such* a being
 “ as he is, a reflecting, thoughtful, inquisitive
 “ being. The particular reason of this, seems
 “ most aptly to be drawn from the praise and
 “ honor that was not only to redound to God
 “ from him, but to be given to God by him.”

The thought which runs through all this passage, of man’s being the priest of nature, and of his existence being calculated chiefly for this end, that he might offer up the praises of the mute part of the creation, is an ingenious thought, and well illustrated. It was a favorite idea among some of the ancient philosophers; and it is not the worse on that account, as it thereby appears to have been a natural sentiment of the human mind. In composing a sermon, however, it might have been better to have introduced it as a sort of collateral argument, or an incidental illustration, than to have displayed it with so much pomp,

and to have placed it in the front of the arguments for this duty. It does not seem to me, when placed in this station, to bear all the stress which the author lays upon it. When the divine goodness brought man into existence, we cannot well conceive that its chief purpose was, to form a being who might sing praises to his maker. Prompted by infinite benevolence, the supreme creator formed the human race, that they might rise to happiness, and to the enjoyment of himself through a course of virtue, or proper action. The sentiment on which our author dwells, however beautiful, appears too loose and rhetorical, to be a principal head of discourse.

“ This duty, therefore, is the debt and law
“ of our nature. And it will more distinctly ap-
“ pear to be such, if we consider the two ruling
“ faculties of our mind, the *understanding* and the
“ *will* apart, in both which it is deeply found-
“ ed: in the understanding, as in the principle
“ of reason, which owns and acknowledges it;
“ in the will, as in the fountain of gratitude
“ and return, which prompts, and even con-
“ strains us to pay it.”

“ *Reason* was given us as a rule and measure
“ by the help of which we were to proportion
“ our esteem of every thing, according to the
“ degrees of perfection and goodness which we
“ found therein. It cannot, therefore, if it doth
“ its office at all, but apprehend God as the best
“ and most perfect being; it must needs see,
“ and own, and admire his infinite perfections.

“ And this is what is strictly meant by *praise* ; which,
 “ therefore is expressed in scripture , by *confessing*
 “ to *God*, and *acknowledging* him ; by *ascribing* to
 “ him what is his due ; and as far as this sense
 “ of the words reaches , ’tis impossible to *think*
 “ of God without praising him ; for it depends
 “ not on the understanding , how it shall appre-
 “ hend things , any more than it doth on the eye,
 “ how visible objects shall appear to it.”

“ The duty takes the further and surer hold
 “ of us, by the means of the will, and that strong
 “ bent towards gratitude , which the author of our
 “ nature hath implanted in it. There is not a more
 “ active principle than this in the mind of man ; and
 “ surely that which deserves its utmost force , and
 “ should set all its springs awork , is God ; the
 “ great and universal benefactor , from whom
 “ alone we received whatever we either have ,
 “ or are , and to whom we can possibly repay
 “ nothing but our praises , or to speak more pro-
 “ perly on this head , and according to the strict
 “ import of the word , our thanksgiving. *Who*
 “ *hath first given to God* (saith the great apostle ,
 “ in his usual figure) *and it shall be recompensed unto*
 “ *him again ?* A gift , it seems , always requires
 “ a recompense : nay, *but of him, and through him,*
 “ *and to him, are all things : of him, as the author ;*
 “ *through him, as the preserver and governor ; to him*
 “ *as the end and perfection of all things : to whom,*
 “ *therefore, (as it follows) be glory for ever, amen.*”

I cannot much approve of the light in which
 our author places his argument in these paragraphs.

There is something too metaphysical and refined, in his deducing, in this manner, the obligation to thanksgiving, from the two faculties of the mind, understanding and will. Though what he says be in itself just, yet the argument is not sufficiently plain and striking. Arguments in sermons, especially on subjects that so naturally and easily suggest them, should be palpable and popular; should not be brought from topics that appear far sought, but should directly address the heart and feelings. The preacher ought never to depart too far from the common ways of thinking, and expressing himself. I am inclined to think, that this whole head might have been improved, if the author had taken up more obvious ground; had stated gratitude as one of the most natural principles in the human heart; had illustrated this, by showing how odious the opposite disposition is, and with what general consent men, in all ages, have agreed in hating, and condemning the ungrateful; and then applying these reasonings to the present case, had placed in a strong view, that entire corruption of moral sentiment which it discovers to be destitute of thankful emotions towards the supreme benefactor of mankind. As the most natural method of giving vent to grateful sentiments is, by external expressions of thanksgiving, he might then have answered the objection that is apt to occur, of the expression of our praise being insignificant to the almighty. But, by seeking to be too refined in his argument, he has omitted some of the most striking and

obvious considerations, and which, properly displayed, would have afforded as great a field for eloquence, as the topics which he has chosen. He goes on.

“Gratitude consists in an equal return of
 “benefits, if we are able; of thanks, if we are
 “not: which thanks, therefore, must rise always
 “in proportion as the favors received are great,
 “and the receiver incapable of making any other
 “sort of requital. Now, since no man hath benefited God at any time, and yet every man, in
 “each moment of his life, is continually benefited
 “by him, what strong obligations must we needs
 “be under to thank him? 'Tis true, our thanks
 “are really as insignificant to him, as any other
 “kind of return would be; in themselves, indeed,
 “they are worthless; but his goodness hath put
 “a value upon them: he hath declared, he will
 “accept them in lieu of the vast debt we owe;
 “and after that, which is fittest for us, to dispute
 “how they came to be taken as an *equivalent*, or
 “to pay them?

“It is, therefore, the voice of nature (as far
 “as gratitude itself is so) that the good things
 “we receive from above, should be sent back
 “again thither in thanks and praises; *as the rivers*
 “*run into the sea, to the place* (the ocean of beneficence) *from whence the rivers come, thither*
 “*should they return again.*”

In these paragraphs, he has, indeed, touched some of the considerations which I mentioned. But he has only touched them; whereas, with

advantage, they might have formed the main body of his argument.

“ We have considered the duty *absolutely*; we
“ are now to *compare* it with others, and to see
“ what rank it bears among them. And here we
“ shall find, that, among all the acts of religion
“ immediately addressed to God, this is much
“ the noblest and most excellent; as it must needs
“ be, if what hath been laid down be allowed,
“ that the end of man’s creation was to praise
“ and glorify God. For that cannot but be the
“ most noble and excellent act of any being,
“ which best answers the end and design of it.
“ Other parts of devotion, such as *confession* and
“ *prayer*, seem not originally to have been design-
“ ed for man, nor man for them. They imply
“ *guilt* and *want*, with which the *state of innocence*
“ was not acquainted. Had man continued in that
“ state, his worship, like the devotions of angels,
“ had been paid to heaven in pure acts of thanks-
“ giving; and nothing had been left for him to
“ do, beyond the enjoying the good things of
“ life, as nature directed, and praising the God
“ of nature who bestowed them. But being
“ fallen from innocence and abundance; having
“ contracted guilt, and forfeited his right to all
“ sorts of mercies; prayer and confession became
“ necessary, for a time, to retrieve the loss, and
“ to restore him to that state wherein he should
“ be able to live without them. These are fitted,
“ therefore, for a lower dispensation, before
“ which, in paradise, there was nothing but

“ praise, and after which, there shall be nothing
 “ but that in heaven. Our perfect state did at
 “ first, and will at last, consist in the performance
 “ of this duty; and herein, therefore, lies the
 “ excellence, and the honor of our nature.

“ ’Tis the same way of reasoning, by which
 “ the apostle hath given the preference to charity,
 “ beyond faith, and hope, and every spiritual
 “ gift. *Charity never faileth*, saith he; meaning,
 “ that it is not a virtue useful only in this life,
 “ but will accompany us also into the next:
 “ *but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail;*
 “ *whether there be tongues, they shall cease;*
 “ *whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*
 “ These are gifts of a temporary advantage, and
 “ shall all perish in the using. *For we know in*
 “ *part, and we prophesy in part:* our present state
 “ is imperfect, and therefore, what belongs to
 “ that, and only that, must be imperfect too.
 “ *But when that which is perfect is come, then that*
 “ *which is in part shall be done away.* The argument
 “ of St. Paul, we see, which sets charity above
 “ the rest of Christian graces, will give praise
 “ also the pre-eminence over all the parts of Chris-
 “ tian worship; and we may conclude our reason-
 “ ing, therefore, as he doth his: *And now abideth*
 “ *confession, prayer, and praise, these three; but*
 “ *the greatest of these is praise.*”

The author, here enters on the second part
 of his argument, the high rank which thanksgiv-
 ing holds, when compared with other duties of
 religion. This he handles, with much eloquence

and beauty. His idea, that this was the original worship of man, before his fall rendered other duties requisite, and shall continue to be his worship in heaven, when the duties which are occasioned by a consciousness of guilt shall have no place, is solid and just; his illustration of it is very happy; and the style extremely flowing and sweet. Seldom do we meet with any piece of composition in sermons, that has more merit than this head.

“ It is so, certainly, on other accounts, as
“ well as this; particularly, as it is the most
“ *disinterested* branch of our religious service; such
“ as hath the most of God, and the least of
“ ourselves in it, of any we pay; and therefore
“ approaches the nearest of any to a pure, and
“ free, and perfect act of homage. For though
“ a good action doth not grow immediately
“ worthless by being done with the prospect of
“ advantage, as some have strangely imagined;
“ yet it will be allowed, I suppose, that its
“ being done, without the mixture of that end,
“ or with as little of it as possible, recommends
“ it so much the more, and raises the price of it.
“ *Doth Job fear God for nought?* was an objection
“ of Satan; which implied, that those duties
“ were most valuable, where our own interest
“ was least aimed at: and God seems, by the
“ commission he then gave Satan, to try experi-
“ ments upon *Job*, thus far to have allowed his
“ plea. Now, our requests for future, and even
“ our acknowledgments of past mercies, centre
purely

“ purely in ourselves ; our own interest is the
 “ direct aim of them. But praise is a generous
 “ and unmercenary principle, which proposes
 “ no other end to itself, but to do, as is fit for
 “ a creature endowed with such faculties to do,
 “ towards the most perfect and beneficent of
 “ beings; and to pay the willing tribute of honor
 “ there, where the voice of reason directs us to
 “ pay it. God hath, indeed, annexed a blessing
 “ to the duty; and when we know this, we cannot
 “ chuse, while we are performing the duty, but
 “ have some regard to the blessing which belongs
 “ to it. However, that is not the direct aim of our
 “ devotions, nor was it the first motive that stir-
 “ red us up to them. Had it been so, we should
 “ naturally have betaken ourselves to prayer, and
 “ breathed out our desires in that form wherein
 “ they are most properly conveyed.

“ In short, praise is our most excellent work,
 “ a work common to the church triumphant and
 “ militant, and which lifts us up into communion
 “ and fellowship with angels. The matter about
 “ which it is conversant, is always the perfection
 “ of God's nature; and the act itself, is the per-
 “ fection of ours.”

Our author's second illustration, is taken from
 praise being the most disinterested act of homage.
 This he explains justly and elegantly; though,
 perhaps, the consideration is rather too thin and
 refined for enforcing religious duties: as creatures
 such as we, in approaching to the divine pre-
 sence, can never be supposed to lay aside all

consideration of our own wants and necessities; and certainly are not required (as the author admits) to divest ourselves of such regards. The concluding sentence of this head is elegant and happily expressed.

“ I come now, in the last place, to set out
“ some of its peculiar *properties and advantages*,
“ which recommend it to the devout performer.
“ And,

“ 1. It is the most *pleasing* part of our devo-
“ tions: it proceeds always from a lively cheerful
“ temper of mind, and it cherishes and improves
“ what it proceeds from. *For it is good to sing*
“ *praises unto our God* (says one, whose experience,
“ in this case, we may rely upon), *for it is pleasant,*
“ *and praise is comely*. Petition and confession are
“ the language of the indigent and the guilty,
“ the breathings of a sad and contrite spirit: *Is*
“ *any afflicted? let him pray; but, is any merry?*
“ *let him sing psalms*. The most usual and natural
“ way of men's expressing the mirth of their
“ hearts is in a song, and songs are the very
“ language of praise; to the expressing of which
“ they are in a peculiar manner appropriated,
“ and are scarce of any other use in religion.
“ Indeed, the whole composition of this duty is
“ such, as throughout speaks ease and delight to
“ the mind. It proceeds from *love* and from
“ *thankfulness*; from *love*, the fountain of pleasure,
“ the passion which gives every thing we do,
“ or enjoy, its relish and agreeableness: from
“ *thankfulness*, which involves in it the memory

“ of past benefits, the actual presence of them to
 “ the mind, and the repeated enjoyment of them.
 “ And as is its principle, such is its end also:
 “ for it procureth quiet and ease to the mind,
 “ by doing somewhat towards satisfying that debt
 “ which it labors under; by delivering it of those
 “ thoughts of praise and gratitude, those exulta-
 “ tions it is so full of; and which would grow
 “ uneasy and troublesome to it, if they were kept
 “ in. If the thankful *refrained*; *it would be pain*
 “ *and grief* to them; but then, then *is their soul*
 “ *satisfied as with marrow and fatness*, when their
 “ *mouth praiseth God with joyful lips.*”

In beginning this head of discourse, the expression which the author uses, to *set out some of its peculiar properties and advantages*, would now be reckoned not so proper an expression as *to point out*, or *to show*. The first subdivision concerning praise being the most pleasant part of devotion, is very just and well expressed, as far as it goes; but seems to me rather defective. Much more might have been said, upon the pleasure that accompanies such exalted acts of devotion. It was a cold thought, to dwell upon its disburdening the mind of a debt. The author should have insisted more upon the influence of praise and thanksgiving, in warming, gladdening, soothing the mind; lifting it above the world, to dwell among divine and eternal objects. He should have described the peace and joy which then expand the heart; the relief which this exercise procures from the cares and agitations of

life; the encouraging views of providence to which it leads our attention; and the trust which it promotes in the divine mercy for the future, by the commemoration of benefits past. In short, this was the place for his pouring out a greater flow of devotional sentiments than what we here find.

“ 2. It is another distinguishing property of
“ divine praise, that it enlargeth the powers and
“ capacities of our souls, turning them from low
“ and little things, upon their greatest and no-
“ blest object, the divine nature, and employing
“ them in the discovery and admiration of those
“ several perfections that adorn it. We see what
“ difference there is between man and man, such
“ as there is hardly greater between man and
“ beast; and this proceeds chiefly from the diffe-
“ rent sphere of thought which they act in, and
“ the different objects they converse with. The
“ mind is essentially the same, in the peasant and
“ the prince; the force of it naturally equal, in
“ the untaught man, and the philosopher; only
“ the one of these is busied in mean affairs, and
“ within narrower bounds; the other exercises
“ himself in things of weight and moment; and
“ this it is, that puts the wide distance between
“ them. Noble objects are to the mind, what
“ the sun-beams are to a bud or flower, they open
“ and unfold, as it were, the leaves of it; put it
“ upon exerting and spreading itself every way;
“ and call forth all those powers that lie hid and
“ locked up in it. The praise and admiration

“ of God, therefore, brings this advantage along
 “ with it, that it sets our faculties upon their full
 “ stretch, and improves them to all the degrees
 “ of perfection of which they are capable.”

This head is just, well expressed, and to censure it might appear hypercritical. Some of the expressions, however, one would think, might be amended. The simile, for instance, about the effects of the sun-beams upon the bud or flower, is pretty, but not correctly expressed. *They open and unfold as it were, the leaves of it.* If this is to be literally applied to the flower, the phrase, *as it were*, is needless; if it is to be metaphorically understood (which appears to be the case), the *leaves of the mind*, is harsh language; besides that, *put it upon exerting itself*, is rather a low expression. Nothing is more nice than to manage properly such similes and allusions, so as to preserve them perfectly correct, and at the same time to render the image lively: it might perhaps be amended in some such way as this: “ As the sun-beams
 “ open the bud, and unfold the leaves of a flow-
 “ er, noble objects have a like effect upon the
 “ mind; they expand and spread it, and call forth
 “ those powers that before lay hid and locked up
 “ in the soul.”

“ 3. It farther promotes in us an exquisite sense
 “ of God's honor, and a high indignation of mind
 “ at every thing that openly profanes it. For
 “ what we value and delight in, we cannot
 “ with patience hear slighted or abused. Our
 “ own praises, which we are constantly putting

“ up, will be a *spur* to us toward procuring and
“ promoting the divine glory in every other in-
“ stance; and will make us set our faces against all
“ open and avowed impieties; which, methinks,
“ should be considered a little by such as would
“ be thought not to be wanting in this duty, and
“ yet are often silent under the foulest dishonors
“ done to religion, and its great author: For
“ tamely to hear God’s name and worship vilified
“ by others, is no very good argument that we
“ have been used to honor and reverence him,
“ in good earnest, ourselves.”

The thought here is well founded, though it is carelessly and loosely brought out. The sentence, *our own praises which we are constantly putting up, will be a spur to us toward procuring and promoting the divine glory in every other instance*, is both negligent in language, and ambiguous in meaning; for *our own praises*, properly signifies the praises of ourselves. Much better if he had said, “those
“ devout praises which we constantly offer up to
“ the almighty, will naturally prompt us to pro-
“ mote the divine glory in every other instance.”

“ 4. It will, beyond all this, work in us a deep
“ humility and consciousness of our own imper-
“ fections. Upon a frequent attention to God and
“ his attributes, we shall easily discover our own
“ weakness and emptiness, our swelling thoughts
“ of ourselves will abate, and we shall see and
“ feel that we are *altogether lighter to be laid in*
“ *the balance than vanity*; and this is a lesson
“ which, to the greatest part of mankind is, I

“ think, very well worth learning. We are natu-
 “ rally presumptuous and vain; full of ourselves,
 “ and regardless of every thing besides, especially
 “ when some little outward privileges distinguish
 “ us from the rest of mankind; then 'tis odds, but
 “ we look into ourselves with great degrees of
 “ complacency, *and are wiser* (and better every
 “ way) *in our own conceit, than seven men that can*
 “ *render a reason.* Now nothing will contribute
 “ so much to the cure of this vanity, as a due atten-
 “ tion to God's excellencies and perfections. By
 “ comparing these with those which we imagine
 “ belong to us, we shall learn, *not to think more*
 “ *highly of ourselves than we ought to think of our-*
 “ *selves, but to think soberly;* we shall find more
 “ satisfaction in looking upwards, and humbling
 “ ourselves before our common creator, than in
 “ casting our eyes downward with scorn upon
 “ our fellow creatures, and setting at nought any
 “ part of the work of his hands. The vast dist-
 “ ance we are at from real and infinite worth,
 “ will astonish us so much, that we shall not be
 “ tempted to value ourselves upon these lesser de-
 “ grees of pre-eminence, which custom or opinion,
 “ or some little accidental advantages have given
 “ us over other men.”

Though the thought here also be just, yet a
 like deficiency in elegance and beauty appears.
 The phrase *'tis odds, but we look into ourselves*
with great degrees of complacency, is much too
 low and colloquial for a sermon — he might have
 said, *we are likely, or we are prone to look into*

ourselves. — *Comparing these with those which we imagine to belong to us, is also very careless style — By comparing these with the virtues and abilities which we ascribe to ourselves, we shall learn —* would have been purer and more correct.

“ 5. I shall mention but one use of it more,
“ and 'tis this; that a conscientious praise of
“ God will keep us back from all false and mean
“ praise, all fulsome and servile flatteries, such as
“ are in use among men. Praising, as 'tis com-
“ monly managed, is nothing else but a trial of
“ skill upon a man, how many good things we
“ can possibly say of him. All the treasures of
“ oratory are ranfacked, and all the fine things
“ that ever were said, are heaped together for his
“ sake; and no matter whether it belongs to him
“ or not; though there be enough on't. Which
“ is one deplorable instance among a thousand, of
“ the baseness of human nature, of its small regard
“ to truth and justice; to right or wrong; to what
“ is, or is not to be praised. But he who hath a
“ deep sense of the excellencies of God upon his
“ heart, will make a God of nothing besides. He
“ will give every one his just encomium, honor
“ where honor is due, and as much as is due, be-
“ cause it is his duty to do so; but the honor of
“ God will suffer him to go no further. Which
“ rule, if it had been observed, a neighbouring
“ prince (who now, God be thanked, needs
“ flattery a great deal more than ever he did),
“ would have wanted a great deal of that incense
“ which hath been offered up to him by his adorers.”

This head appears scarcely to deserve any place among the more important topics, that naturally presented themselves on this subject; at least, it had much better have wanted the application which the author makes of his reasoning to the flatterers of Louis XIV; and the thanks which he offers to God, for the affairs of that prince being in so low a state, that he now needed flattery more than ever. This political satire is altogether out of place, and unworthy of the subject.

One would be inclined to think, upon reviewing our author's arguments, that he has overlooked some topics, respecting the happy consequences of this duty, of fully as much importance as any that he has inserted. Particularly, he ought not to have omitted the happy tendency of praise and thanksgiving, to strengthen good dispositions in the heart; to promote love to God, and imitation of those perfections which we adore; and to infuse a spirit of ardor and zeal into the whole of religion, as the service of our benefactor. These are consequences which naturally follow from the proper performance of this duty; and which ought not to have been omitted; as no opportunity should be lost, of showing the good effect of devotion on practical religion and moral virtue; and pointing out the necessary connexion of the one with the other. For certainly the great end of preaching is, to make men better in all the relations of life, and to promote that complete reformation of heart

and conduct, in which true Christianity consists. Our author, however, upon the whole, is not deficient in such views of religion; for, in his general strain of preaching, as he is extremely pious, so he is, at the same time, practical and moral.

His summing up the whole argument, in the next paragraph is elegant and beautiful; and such concluding views of the subject are frequently very proper and useful: "Upon these grounds
" doth the duty of praise stand, and these are
" the obligations that bind us to the perfor-
" mance of it. 'Tis the end of our being, and
" the very rule and law of our nature; flowing
" from the two great fountains of human action,
" the understanding and the will, naturally, and
" almost necessarily. It is the most excellent part
" of our religious worship; enduring to eternity,
" after the rest shall be *done away*; and paid, even
" now, in the frankest manner, with the least
" regard to our own interest. It recommends
" itself to us by several peculiar properties and
" advantages; as it carries more pleasure in it,
" than all other kinds of devotion; as it enlarges
" and exalts the several powers of the mind; as
" it breeds in us an exquisite sense of God's
" honor, and a willingness to promote it in the
" world; as it teaches us to be humble and lowly
" ourselves, and yet preserves us from base and
" sordid flattery, from bestowing mean and
" undue praises upon others."

After this, our author addresses himself to two classes of men, the careless and the profane. His address to the careless is beautiful, and pathetic; that to the profane, is not so well executed, and is liable to some objection. Such addresses appear to me to be, on several occasions, very useful parts of a discourse. They prevailed much in the strain of preaching before the restoration; and, perhaps, since that period, have been too much neglected. They afford an opportunity of bringing home to the consciences of the audience, many things, which, in the course of the sermon, were, perhaps, delivered in the abstract.

I shall not dwell on the conclusion of the sermon, which is chiefly employed in observations on the posture of public affairs at that time. Considered, upon the whole, this discourse of Bishop Atterbury's is both useful and beautiful, though I have ventured to point out some defects in it. Seldom, or never, can we expect to meet with a composition of any kind, which is absolutely perfect in all its parts: and when we take into account the difficulties which I before showed to attend the eloquence of the pulpit, we have, perhaps, less reason to look for perfection in a sermon, than in any other composition.

LECTURE XXXI.

Conduct of a Discourse in all its Parts. — Introduction. — Division. Narration and Explication.

I HAVE, in the four preceding lectures, considered what is peculiar to each of the three great fields of public speaking, popular assemblies, the bar, and the pulpit. I am now to treat of what is common to them all; of the conduct of a discourse or oration, in general. The previous view which I have given of the distinguishing spirit and character of different kinds of public speaking, was necessary for the proper application of the rules which I am about to deliver; and as I proceed, I shall farther point out, how far any of these rules may have a particular respect to the bar, to the pulpit, or to popular courts.

On whatever subject any one intends to discourse, he will most commonly begin with some introduction, in order to prepare the minds of his hearers; he will then state his subject, and explain the facts connected with it; he will employ

arguments for establishing his own opinion, and overthrowing that of his antagonist; he may perhaps, if there be room for it, endeavour to touch the passions of his audience; and after having said all he thinks proper, he will bring his discourse to a close, by some peroration or conclusion. This being the natural train of speaking, the parts that compose a regular formal oration, are these six; first, the exordium or introduction, secondly, the state, and the division of the subject; thirdly, narration, or explication; fourthly, the reasoning or arguments; fifthly, the pathetic part; and lastly, the conclusion. I do not mean, that each of these must enter into every public discourse, or that they must enter always in this order. There is no reason for being so formal on every occasion; nay, it would often be a fault, and would render a discourse pedantic and stiff. There may be many excellent discourses in public, where several of these parts are altogether wanting; where the speaker, for instance, uses no introduction, but enters directly on his subject; where he has no occasion either to divide or explain; but simply reasons on one side of the question, and then finishes. But as the parts, which I mentioned, are the natural constituent parts of a regular oration; and as in every discourse whatever, some of them must be found, it is necessary to our present purpose, that I should treat of each of them distinctly.

I begin, of course, with the exordium or introduction. This is manifestly common to all

the three kinds of public speaking. It is not a rhetorical invention. It is founded upon nature, and suggested by common sense. When one is going to counsel another; when he takes upon him to instruct, or to reprove, prudence will generally direct him not to do it abruptly, but to use some preparation; to begin with somewhat that may incline the persons, to whom he addresses himself, to judge favorably of what he is about to say; and may dispose them to such a train of thought, as will forward and assist the purpose which he has in view. This is, or ought to be, the main scope of an introduction. Accordingly Cicero and Quinctilian mention three ends, to one or other of which it should be subservient. “reddere auditores benevolos, attentos, dociles.”

First, To conciliate the good will of the hearers; to render them benevolent, or well-affected to the speaker and to the subject. Topics for this purpose may, in causes at the bar, be sometimes taken from the particular situation of the speaker himself, or of his client, or from the character or behaviour of his antagonists contrasted with his own; on other occasions, from the nature of the subject, as closely connected with the interest of the hearers: and, in general, from the modesty and good intention, with which the speaker enters upon his subject. The second end of an introduction, is, to raise the attention of the hearers; which may be effected, by giving them some hints of the

importance, dignity, or novelty of the subject; or some favorable view of the clearness and precision with which we are to treat it; and of the brevity with which we are to discourse. The third end, is to render the hearers docile, or open to persuasion; for which end, we must begin with studying to remove any particular prepossessions they may have contracted against the cause, or side of the argument which we espouse.

Some one of these ends should be proposed by every introduction. When there is no occasion for aiming at any of them; when we are already secure of the good will, the attention, and the docility of the audience, as may often be the case, formal introductions can, without any prejudice, be omitted. And, indeed, when they serve for no purpose but mere ostentation, they had, for the most part, better be omitted; unless as far as respect to the audience makes it decent, that a speaker should not break in upon them too abruptly, but by a short exordium prepare them for what he is going to say. Demosthenes's introductions are always short and simple; Cicero's are fuller and more artful.

The ancient critics distinguish two kinds of introductions, which they call "principium," and "insinuatio." "Principium" is, where the orator plainly and directly professes his aim in speaking, "insinuatio" is, where a larger compass must be taken; and where, presuming the disposition of the audience be too much against

the orator, he must gradually reconcile them to hearing him, before he plainly discovers the point which he has in view.

Of this latter sort of introduction, we have an admirable instance in Cicero's second oration against Rullus. This Rullus was tribune of the people, and had proposed an agrarian law; the purpose of which was to create a decemvirate, or ten commissioners, with absolute power for five years over all the lands conquered by the republic, in order to divide them among the citizens. Such laws had often been proposed by factious magistrates, and were always greedily received by the people. Cicero is speaking to the people; he had newly been made consul by their interest; and his first attempt is to make them reject this law. The subject was extremely delicate, and required much art. He begins with acknowledging all the favors which he had received from the people, in preference to the nobility. He professes himself the creature of their power, and of all men the most engaged to promote their interest. He declares, that he held himself to be the consul of the people; and that he would always glory in preserving the character of a popular magistrate. But to be popular, he observes, is an ambiguous word. He understood it to import, a steady attachment to the real interest of the people, to their liberty, their ease, and their peace; but by some he saw, it was abused, and made a cover to their own selfish and ambitious designs. In this manner

manner, he begins to draw gradually nearer to his purpose of attacking the proposal of Rullus; but still with great management and reserve. He protests, that he is far from being an enemy to agrarian laws; he gives the highest praises to the Gracchi, those zealous patrons of the people; and assures them, that when he first heard of Rullus's law, he had resolved to support it, if he found it for their interest; but that, upon examining it, he found it calculated to establish a dominion that was inconsistent with liberty, and to aggrandize a few men at the expense of the public: and then terminates his exordium, with telling them, that he is going to give his reasons for being of this opinion; but that if his reasons shall not satisfy them, he will give up his own opinion, and embrace theirs. In all this, there was great art. His eloquence produced the intended effect; and the people, with one voice, rejected this agrarian law.

Having given these general views of the nature and end of an introduction, I proceed to lay down some rules for the proper composition of it. These are the more necessary, that this is a part of the discourse which requires no small care. It is always of importance to begin well; to make a favorable impression at first setting out; when the minds of the hearers, vacant as yet and free, are most disposed to receive any impression easily. I must add too, that a good introduction is often found to be extremely difficult. Few parts of the discourse give the composer

more trouble, or are attended with more nicety in the execution.

The first rule is, that the introduction should be easy and natural. The subject must always suggest it. It must appear, as Cicero beautifully expresses it: "*Effloruisse penitus ex re de qua tum agitur* *." It is too common a fault in introductions, that they are taken from some common-place topic, which has no peculiar relation to the subject in hand; by which means they stand apart, like pieces detached from the rest of the discourse. Of this kind are Sallust's introductions, prefixed to his Catilinarian and Jugurthine wars. They might as well have been introductions to any history, or to any other treatise whatever: and, therefore, though elegant in themselves, they must be considered as blemishes in the work, from want of due connection with it. Cicero, though abundantly correct in this particular in his orations, yet is not so in his other works. It appears from a letter of his to Atticus (L. xvi. 6.) that it was his custom to prepare, at his leisure, a collection of different introductions or prefaces, ready to be prefixed to any work that he might afterwards publish. In consequence of this strange method of composing, it happened to him, to employ the same introduction twice without remembering it; prefixing it to two different works. Upon Atticus

* "To have sprung up, of its own accord, from the matter which is under consideration."

informing him of this, he acknowledges the mistake, and sends him a new introduction.

In order to render introductions natural and easy, it is, in my opinion, a good rule, that they should not be planned, till after one has meditated in his own mind the substance of his discourse. Then, and not till then, he should begin to think of some proper and natural introduction. By taking a contrary course, and laboring in the first place on an introduction, every one who is accustomed to composition will often find, that either he is led to lay hold of some common-place topic, or, that instead of the introduction being accommodated to the discourse, he is obliged to accommodate the whole discourse to the introduction which he had previously written. Cicero makes this remark; though, as we have seen, his practice was not always conformable to his own rule. “*Omnibus
“ rebus consideratis, tum denique id quod pri-
“ mum est dicendum postremum soleo cogitare,
“ quo utar exordio. Nam si quando id primum
“ invenire volui, nullum mihi occurrit, nisi aut
“ exile, aut nugatorium, aut vulgare **.” After the mind has been once warmed and put in

* “*When I have planned and digested all the materials
“ of my discourse, it is my custom to think, in the last
“ place, of the introduction with which I am to begin. For
“ if, at any time, I have endeavoured to invent an intro-
“ duction first, nothing has ever occurred to me for that
“ purpose, but what was trifling, nugatory, and vulgar.*”

train, by close meditation on the subject, materials for the preface will then suggest themselves much more readily.

In the second place, in an introduction, correctness should be carefully studied in the expression. This is requisite, on account of the situation of the hearers. They are then more disposed to criticize than at any other period; they are, as yet, unoccupied with the subject or the arguments; their attention is wholly directed to the speaker's style and manner. Something must be done, therefore, to prepossess them in his favor; though for the same reasons, too much art must be avoided; for it will be more easily detected at that time, than afterwards; and will derogate from persuasion in all that follows. A correct plainness, an elegant simplicity, is the proper character of an introduction; "*ut videamur*, says Quintilian, "*accurate non callide dicere.*"

In the third place, modesty is another character which it must carry. All appearances of modesty are favorable, and prepossessing. If the orator set out with an air of arrogance and ostentation, the self-love and pride of the hearers will be presently awakened, and will follow him with a very suspicious eye throughout all his progress. His modesty should discover itself not only in his expressions at the beginning, but in his whole manner; in his looks, in his gestures, in the tone of his voice. Every auditory take in good part those marks of respect and awe,

which are paid to them by one who addresses them. Indeed the modesty of an introduction should never betray any thing mean or abject. It is always of great use to an orator, that together with modesty and deference to his hearers, he should show a certain sense of dignity, arising from a persuasion of the justice, or importance, of the subject on which he is to speak.

The modesty of an introduction requires, that it promise not too much. “Non fumum ex fulgore; sed ex fumo dare lucem*.” This certainly is the general rule, that an orator should not put forth all his strength at the beginning; but should rise and grow upon us, as his discourse advances. There are cases, however, in which it is allowable for him to set out from the first in a high and bold tone; as, for instance, when he rises to defend some cause which has been much run down, and decried by the public. Too modest a beginning, might be then like a confession of guilt. By the boldness and strength of his exordium, he must endeavour to stem the tide that is against him, and to remove prejudices, by encountering them without fear. In subjects too of a declamatory nature, and in sermons, where the subject is striking, a magnificent introduction

* He does not lavish at a blaze his fire,
Sudden to glare, and then in smoke expire;
But rises from a cloud of smoke to light,
And pours his specious miracles to fight.

HOR. ARS POET. FRANCIS.

has sometimes a good effect, if it be properly supported in the sequel. Thus Bishop Atterbury, in beginning an eloquent sermon, preached on the 30th of January, the anniversary of what is called King Charles's martyrdom, sets out in this pompous manner: "This is a day of trouble, of rebuke, and of blasphemy, distinguished in the calendar of our church, and the annals of our nation, by the sufferings of an excellent prince, who fell a sacrifice to the rage of his rebellious subjects; and by his fall, derived infamy, misery, and guilt on them, and their sinful posterity." Bossuet, Fléchier, and the other celebrated French preachers very often begin their discourses with labored and sublime introductions. These raise attention, and throw a lustre on the subject: but let every speaker be much on his guard against striking a higher note at the beginning, than he is able to keep up in his progress.

In the fourth place an introduction should usually be carried on in the calm manner. This is seldom the place for vehemence and passion. Emotions must rise, as the discourse advances. The minds of the hearers must be gradually prepared, before the speaker can venture on strong and passionate sentiments. The exceptions to this rule are, when the subject is such, that the very mention of it naturally awakens some passionate emotion; or when the unexpected presence of some person or object, in a popular assembly, inflames the speaker, and makes him

break forth with unusual warmth. Either of these will justify what is called, the exordium *ab abrupto*. Thus the appearance of Catiline in the senate, renders the vehement beginning of Cicero's first oration against him very natural and proper. "Quousque tandem, Catilina, abutere patientia nostra?" And thus Bishop Atterbury, in preaching from this text, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me," ventures on breaking forth with this bold exordium; "And can any man then be offended in thee, blessed Jesus?" which address to our saviour, he continues for a page or two, till he enters on the division of his subject. But such introductions as these should be hazarded by very few, as they promise so much vehemence and unction through the rest of the discourse, that it is very difficult to fulfil the expectations of the hearers.

At the same time, though the introduction is not the place in which warm emotions are usually to be attempted, yet I must take notice, that it ought to prepare the way for such as are designed to be raised in subsequent parts of the discourse. The orator should, in the beginning, turn the minds of his hearers towards those sentiments and feelings which he seeks to awaken in the course of his speech. According, for instance, as it is compassion, or indignation, or contempt, on which his discourse is to rest, he ought to sow the seeds of these in his introduction; he ought to begin with breathing

that spirit which he means to inspire. Much of the orator's art and ability is shown, in thus striking properly at the commencement, the keynote, if we may so express it, of the rest of his oration.

In the fifth place, it is a rule in introductions, not to anticipate any material part of the subject. When topics, or arguments, which are afterwards to be enlarged upon, are hinted at, and, in part, brought forth in the introduction, they lose the grace of novelty upon their second appearance. The impression intended to be made by any capital thought, is always made with the greatest advantage, when it is made entire, and in its proper place.

In the last place, the introduction ought to be proportioned, both in length and in kind, to the discourse that is to follow: in length, as nothing can be more absurd than to erect a very great portico before a small building; and in kind, as it is no less absurd to overcharge, with superb ornaments, the portico of a plain dwelling-house, or to make the entrance to a monument as gay as that to an arbour. Common sense directs, that every part of a discourse should be suited to the strain and spirit of the whole.

These are the principal rules that relate to introductions. They are adapted, in a great measure, equally, to discourses of all kinds. In pleadings at the bar, or speeches in public assemblies, particular care must be taken not to employ any introduction of that kind, which the

adverse party may lay hold of, and turn to his advantage. To this inconvenience, all those introductions are exposed, which are taken from general and common-place topics; and it never fails to give an adversary a considerable triumph, if, by giving a small turn to something we had said in our exordium, he can appear to convert, to his own favor, the principles with which we had set out, in beginning our attack upon him. In the case of replies, Quinctilian makes an observation which is very worthy of notice; that introductions, drawn from something that has been said in the course of the debate, have always a peculiar grace; and the reason he gives for it is just and sensible: “Multum gratiæ exor-
 “dio est, quod ab actione adversæ partis mate-
 “riam trahit; hoc ipso, quod non compositum
 “domi, sed ibi atque e re natum, & facilitate
 “famam ingenii auget, & facie simplicis, sump-
 “tisque e proximo sermonis, fidem quoque ac-
 “quirit; adeo, ut etiamsi reliqua scripta atque
 “elaborata sint, tamen videatur tota extempo-
 “ralis oratio, cujus initium nihil præparatum
 “babuisse, manifestum est*.”

* “An introduction, which is founded upon the pleading
 “of the opposite party, is extremely graceful; for this rea-
 “son, that it appears not to have been meditated at home,
 “but to have taken rise from the business, and to have been
 “composed on the spot. Hence, it gives to the speaker the
 “reputation of a quick invention, and adds weight likewise
 “to his discourse, as artless and unlabored; insomuch, that
 “though all the rest of his oration should be studied and

In sermons, such a practice as this cannot take place; and, indeed, in composing sermons, few things are more difficult than to remove an appearance of stiffness from an introduction, when a formal one is used. The French preachers, as I before observed, are often very splendid and lively in their introductions; but, among us, attempts of this kind are not always so successful. When long introductions are formed upon some common-place topic, as the desire of happiness being natural to man, or the like, they never fail of being tedious. Variety should be studied in this part of composition as much as possible; often it may be proper to begin without any introduction at all, unless, perhaps, one or two sentences. Explanatory introductions from the context, are the most simple of any, and frequently the best that can be used: but as they are in hazard of becoming dry, they should never be long. A historical introduction has, generally, a happy effect to rouse attention; when one can lay hold upon some noted fact that is connected with the text or the discourse, and, by a proper deduction of it, open the way to the subject that is to be treated of.

After the introduction, what commonly comes next in order, is, the proposition, or enunciation of the subject; concerning which there is
“written, yet the whole discourse has the appearance of being
“extemporary, as it is evident that the introduction to it was
“unpremeditated.”

nothing to be said, but that it should be as clear and distinct as possible, and expressed in few and plain words, without the least affectation. To this, generally succeeds the division, or the laying down the method of the discourse; on which it is necessary to make some observations. I do not mean, that, in every discourse, a formal division, or distribution of it into parts, is requisite. There are many occasions of public speaking, when this is neither requisite, nor would be proper; when the discourse, perhaps, is to be short, or only one point is to be treated of; or when the speaker does not chuse to warn his hearers of the method he is to follow, or of the conclusion to which he seeks to bring them. Order of one kind or other is, indeed, essential to every good discourse; that is, every thing should be so arranged as that what goes before, may give light and force to what follows after. But this may be accomplished by means of a concealed method. What we call division, is, when the method is propounded in form to the hearers.

The discourse in which this sort of division most commonly takes place, is a sermon; and a question has been moved, whether this method of laying down heads, as it is called, be the best method of preaching. A very able judge, the Archbishop of Cambray, in his Dialogues on Eloquence, declares strongly against it. He observes, that it is a modern invention; that it was never practised by the fathers of the church;

and, what is certainly true, that it took its rise from the schoolmen, when metaphysics began to be introduced into preaching. He is of opinion, that it renders a sermon stiff, that it breaks the unity of the discourse; and that, by the natural connexion of one part with another, the attention of the hearers would be carried along the whole with more advantage.

But, notwithstanding his authority and his arguments, I cannot help being of opinion, that the present method of dividing a sermon into heads, ought not to be laid aside. Established practice has now given it so much weight, that, were there nothing more in its favor, it would be dangerous for any preacher to deviate so far from the common tract. But the practice itself has also, in my judgment, much reason on its side. If formal partitions give a sermon less of the oratorical appearance, they render it, however, more clear, more easily apprehended, and, of course, more instructive to the bulk of hearers, which is always the main object to be kept in view. The heads of a sermon are great assistances to the memory, and recollection of a hearer. They serve also to fix his attention. They enable him more easily to keep pace with the progress of the discourse; they give him pauses and resting places, where he can reflect on what has been said, and look forward to what is to follow. They are attended with this advantage too, that they give the audience the opportunity of knowing, before hand, when they are

to be released from the fatigue of attention, and thereby make them follow the speaker more patiently: "Reficit audientem," says Quinctilian, taking notice of this very advantage of divisions in other discourses, "reficit audientem certo
"singularem partium sine; non aliter quam facientibus iter, multum detrahunt fatigationis
"notata spatia inscriptis lapidibus; nam & exhausti laboris nosse mensuram voluptati est; &
"hortatur ad reliqua fortius exequenda, scire quantum superlit *." With regard to breaking the unity of a discourse, I cannot be of opinion that there arises, from that quarter, any argument against the method I am defending. If the unity be broken, it is to the nature of the heads, or topics of which the speaker treats, that this is to be imputed; not to his laying them down in form. On the contrary, if his heads be well-chosen, his marking them out, and distinguishing them, in place of impairing the unity of the whole, renders it more conspicuous and complete; by showing how all the parts of a discourse hang upon one another, and tend to one point.

In a sermon, or in a pleading, or any discourse, where division is proper to be used, the most material rules are,

* "The conclusion of each head is a relief to the hearers; just as, upon a journey, the mile-stones, which are set up on the road, serve to diminish the traveller's fatigue. For we are always pleased with seeing our labor begin to lessen; and, by calculating how much remains, are stirred up to finish our task more cheerfully."

First, that the several parts into which the subject is divided, be really distinct from one another; that is, that no one include another. It were a very absurd division, for instance, if one should propose to treat first, of the advantages of virtue, and next, of those of justice or temperance; because, the first head evidently comprehends the second, as a genus does the species; which method of proceeding involves the subject in indistinctness and disorder.

Secondly, in division, we must take care to follow the order of nature; beginning with the simplest points, such as are easiest apprehended, and necessary to be first discussed; and proceeding thence to those which are built upon the former, and which suppose them to be known. We must divide the subject into those parts, into which most easily and naturally it is resolved; that the subject may seem to split itself, and not to be violently torn asunder: "Dividere," as is commonly said, "non frangere."

Thirdly, the several members of a division ought to exhaust the subject; otherwise we do not make a complete division; we exhibit the subject by pieces and corners only, without giving any such plan as displays the whole.

Fourthly, the terms in which our partitions are expressed, should be as concise as possible. Avoid all circumlocution here. Admit not a single word but what is necessary. Precision is to be studied, above all things, in laying down a method. It is this which chiefly makes a division

appear neat and elegant; when the several heads are propounded in the clearest, most expressive, and, at the same time, the fewest words possible. This never fails to strike the hearers agreeably; and is, at the same time, of great consequence towards making the divisions be more easily remembered.

Fifthly, avoid an unnecessary multiplication of heads. To split a subject into a great many minute parts, by divisions and subdivisions without end, has always a bad effect in speaking. It may be proper in a logical treatise; but it makes an oration appear hard and dry, and unnecessarily fatigues the memory. In a sermon, there may be from three to five, or six heads, including subdivisions; seldom should there be more.

In a sermon, or in a pleading at the bar, few things are of greater consequence, than a proper and happy division. It should be studied with much accuracy and care; for if one take a wrong method at first setting out, it will lead him astray in all that follows. It will render the whole discourse either perplexed or languid; and though the hearers may not be able to tell where the fault or disorder lies, they will be sensible there is a disorder somewhere, and find themselves little affected by what is spoken. The French writers of sermons study neatness and elegance in laying down their heads, much more than the English do; whose distributions, though sensible and just, yet are often inartificial and

verbose. Among the French, however, too much quaintness appears in their divisions, with an affectation of always setting out either with two, or with three, general heads of discourse. A division of Massillon's on this text, "it is finished," has been much extolled by the French critics: "This imports," says the preacher, the "consummation, first, of justice on the part of God; secondly, of wickedness on the part of men; thirdly, of love on the part of Christ." This also of Bourdaloue's has been much praised, from these works. "My peace I give unto you." "Peace," says he, "first, to the understanding, by submission to faith; secondly, to the heart, by submission to the law."

The next constituent part of a discourse, which I mentioned, was narration or explication. I put these two together, both because they fall nearly under the same rules, and because they commonly answer the same purpose; serving to illustrate the cause, or the subject of which one treats, before proceeding to argue either on one side or other; or to make any attempt for interesting the passions of the hearers.

In pleadings at the bar, narration is often a very important part of the discourse, and requires to be particularly attended to. Besides, its being in any case no easy matter to relate with grace and propriety, there is, in narrations at the bar, a peculiar difficulty. The pleader must say nothing but what is true; and, at the same time, he must avoid saying any thing that will hurt

hurt his cause. The facts which he relates, are to be the ground-work of all his future reasoning. To recount them so as to keep strictly within the bounds of truth, and yet to present them under the colors most favorable to his cause; to place, in the most striking light, every circumstance which is to his advantage, and to soften and weaken such as make against him, demands no small exertion of skill and dexterity. He must always remember, that if he discovers too much art, he defeats his own purpose, and creates a distrust of his sincerity. Quintilian very properly directs, “*effugienda in hac præcipue*”
 “*parte, omnis calliditatis suspicio; neque enim*”
 “*se usquam magis custodit iudex, quam cum*”
 “*narrat orator: nihil tum videatur fictum; nihil*”
 “*sollicitum; omnia potius a causa, quam ab*”
 “*oratore, profecta videantur* *.”

To be clear and distinct, to be probable, and to be concise, are the qualities which critics chiefly require in narration; each of which carries, sufficiently, the evidence of its importance. Distinctness belongs to the whole train of the discourse, but is especially requisite in narration, which ought to throw light on all

* “*In this part of discourse, the speaker must be very*”
 “*careful to shun every appearance of art and cunning. For*”
 “*there is no time at which the judge is more upon his guard,*”
 “*than when the pleader is relating facts. Let nothing then*”
 “*seem feigned; nothing anxiously concealed. Let all that is*”
 “*said, appear to arise from the cause itself, and not to be*”
 “*the work of the orator.*”

that follows. A fact, or a single circumstance left in obscurity, and misapprehended by the judge, may destroy the effect of all the argument and reasoning which the speaker employs. If his narration be improbable, the judge will not regard it; and if it be tedious and diffuse, he will tire of it, and forget it. In order to produce distinctness, besides the study of the general rules of perspicuity which were formerly given, narration requires particular attention to ascertain clearly the names, the dates, the places, and every other material circumstance of the facts recounted. In order to be probable in narration, it is material to enter into the characters of the persons of whom we speak, and to show, that their actions proceeded from such motives as are natural, and likely to gain belief. In order to be as concise as the subject will admit, it is necessary to throw out all superfluous circumstances; the rejection of which, will likewise tend to make our narration more forcible, and more clear.

Cicero is very remarkable for his talent of narration; and from the examples in his orations much may be learned. The narration, for instance, in the celebrated oration *pro Milone*, has been often and justly admired. His scope is to show, that though in fact Clodius was killed by Milo or his servants, yet that it was only in self-defence; and that the design had been laid, not by Milo against Clodius, but by Clodius against Milo's life. All the circumstances for rendering

this probable are painted with wonderful art. In relating the manner of Milo's setting out from Rome, he gives the most natural description of a family excursion to the country, under which it was impossible that any bloody design could be concealed. "He remained," says he, in "the senate-house that day, till all the business" was over. He came home, changed his clothes "deliberately, and waited for some time, till" his wife had got all her things ready for going "with him in his carriage to the country. He" did not set out, till such time as Clodius "might easily have been in Rome, if he had" not been lying in wait for Milo by the way. "By and by, Clodius met him on the road, on" horseback, like a man prepared for action, "no carriage, not his wife, as was usual, nor" any family equipage along with him: whilst "Milo, who is supposed to be meditating" slaughter and assassination, is travelling in a "carriage with his wife, wrapped up in his" cloak, embarrassed with baggage, and attended "by a great train of women servants, and boys." He goes on, describing the rencounter that followed, Clodius's servants attacking those of Milo, and killing the driver of his carriage; Milo jumping out, throwing off his cloak, and making the best defence he could, while Clodius's servants endeavoured to surround him; and then concludes his narration with a very delicate and happy stroke. He does not say in plain words, that Milo's servants killed Clodius, but that "in

“ the midst of the tumult, Milo’s servants,
 “ without the orders, without the knowledge,
 “ without the presence of their master, did what
 “ every master would have wished his servants,
 “ in a like conjuncture, to have done *.”

In sermons, where there is seldom any occasion for narration, explication of the subject to be discoursed on, comes in the place of narration

* “ Milo cum in senatu fuisset, eo die, quoad senatus
 “ dimissus est, domum venit. Calceos & vestimenta mutavit;
 “ paulisper, dum se uxor (ut fit) comparat, commoratus est;
 “ deinde profectus est, id temporis cum jam Clodius, si quidem
 “ eo die Romam venturus erat, redire potuisset. Obviam fit ei
 “ Clodius expeditus, in equo, nulla rheda, nullis impedimentis,
 “ nullis Græcis comitibus, ut solebat; sine uxore, quod nunquam fere. Cum hic infiator,
 “ qui iter illud ad cædem faciendam apparasset, cum uxore
 “ veheretur in rheda, penulatus, vulgi magno impedimento,
 “ ac muliebri & delicato ancillarum puerorumque comitatu.
 “ Fit obviam Clodio ante fundum ejus, hora fere undecima,
 “ aut non multo secus. Statim complures cum telis in hunc faciunt
 “ de loco superiore impetum: adversi rhedarium occidunt;
 “ cum autem hic de rheda, rejecta penula defiluisset, seque
 “ acri animo defenderet, illi qui erant cum Clodio, gladiis
 “ eductis, partim recurrere ad rhedam, ut a tergo Milonem
 “ adorirentur; partim, quod hunc jam interfectum putarent,
 “ cedere incipiunt ejus servos qui post erant; ex quibus
 “ qui animo fideli in dominum & præsentem fuerunt, partim
 “ occisi sunt; partim cum ad rhedam pugnare viderent, &
 “ domino succurrere prohiberentur, Milonemque occisum etiam
 “ ex ipso Clodio audirent, & ita esse putarent, fecerunt id
 “ servi Milonis (dicam enim non derivandi criminis causa,
 “ sed ut factum est) neque imperante, neque sciente, neque
 “ præsentem domino, quod suos quisque servos in tali re
 “ facere voluisset.”

at the bar, and is to be taken up much on the same tone; that is, it must be concise, clear, and distinct; and in a style correct and elegant, rather than highly adorned. To explain the doctrine of the text with propriety; to give a full and perspicuous account of the nature of that virtue or duty which forms the subject of the discourse, is properly the didactic part of preaching; on the right execution of which much depends for all that comes afterward in the way of persuasion. The great art of succeeding in it, is, to meditate profoundly on the subject, so as to be able to place it in a clear and strong point of view. Consider what light other passages of scripture throw upon it; consider whether it be a subject nearly related to some other from which it is proper to distinguish it; consider whether it can be illustrated to advantage by comparing it with, or opposing it to, some other thing; by inquiring into causes, or tracing effects; by pointing out examples, or appealing to the feelings of the hearers; that thus, a definite, precise, circumstantial view may be afforded of the doctrine to be inculcated. Let the preacher be persuaded, that by such distinct and apt illustrations of the known truths of religion, he may both display great merit in the way of composition, and, what he ought to consider as far more valuable, render his discourses weighty, instructive, and useful.

LECTURE XXXII.

Conduct of a Discourse. — The Argumentative Part. — The Pathetic Part. — The Peroration.

IN treating of the constituent parts of a regular discourse or oration, I have already considered the introduction, the division, and the narration or explication. I proceed next to treat of the argumentative or reasoning part of a discourse. In whatever place, or on whatever subject one speaks, this beyond doubt is of the greatest consequence. For the great end for which men speak on any serious occasion, is to convince their hearers of something being either true, or right, or good; and, by means of this conviction, to influence their practice. Reason and argument make the foundation, as I have often inculcated, of all manly and persuasive eloquence.

Now, with respect to arguments, three things are requisite. First, the invention of them; secondly, the proper disposition and arrangement of them; and thirdly, the expressing of them in

such a style and manner, as to give them their full force.

The first of these, invention, is without doubt, the most material, and the ground-work of the rest. But, with respect to this, I am afraid it is beyond the power of art to give any real assistance. Art cannot go so far, as to supply a speaker with arguments on every cause, and every subject; though it may be of considerable use in assisting him to arrange, and express those, which his knowledge of the subject has discovered. For it is one thing to discover the reasons that are most proper to convince men, and another, to manage those reasons with most advantage. The latter is all that rhetoric can pretend to.

The ancient rhetoricians did indeed attempt to go much farther than this. They attempted to form rhetoric into a more complete system: and professed not only to assist public speakers in setting off their arguments to most advantage; but to supply the defect of their invention, and to teach them where to find arguments on every subject and cause. Hence their doctrine of topics, or “*loci communes*,” and “*sedes argumentorum*,” which makes so great a figure in the writings of Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian. These topics or loci, were no other than general ideas applicable to a great many different subjects, which the orator was directed to consult, in order to find out materials for his speech. They had their intrinsic and extrinsic loci; some loci,

that were common to all the different kinds of public speaking, and some that were peculiar to each. The common or general loci, were such as genus and species, cause and effect, antecedents and consequents, likeness and contrariety, definition, circumstances of time and place; and a great many more of the same kind. For each of the different kinds of public speaking, they had their "loci personarum," and "loci rerum:" As in demonstrative orations, for instance, the heads from which any one could be decried or praised; his birth, his country, his education, his kindred, the qualities of his body, the qualities of his mind, the fortune he enjoyed, the stations he had filled, &c. and in deliberative orations, the topics that might be used in recommending any public measure, or dissuading from it; such as honesty, justice, facility, profit, pleasure, glory, assistance from friends, mortification to enemies and the like.

The Grecian sophists were the first inventors of this artificial system of oratory; and they showed a prodigious subtilty, and fertility in the contrivance of these loci. Succeeding rhetoricians, dazzled by the plan, wrought them up into so regular a system, that one would think they meant to teach how a person might mechanically become an orator, without any genius at all. They gave him receipts for making speeches, on all manner of subjects. At the same time, it is evident, that though this study of common places might produce very showy academical

declamations, it could never produce useful discourses on real business. The loci indeed supplied a most exuberant fecundity of matter. One who had no other aim, but to talk copiously and plausibly, by consulting them on every subject, and laying hold of all that they suggested, might discourse without end; and that too, though he had none but the most superficial knowledge of his subject. But such discourse, could be no other than trivial. What is truly solid and persuasive, must be drawn “*ex visceribus causæ*,” from a thorough knowledge of the subject, and profound meditation on it. They who would direct students of oratory to any other sources of argumentation, only delude them; and by attempting to render rhetoric too perfect an art, they render it, in truth, a trifling and childish study.

On this doctrine, therefore, of the rhetorical loci or topics, I think it superfluous to insist. If any think that the knowledge of them may contribute to improve their invention, and extend their views, they may consult Aristotle and Quintilian, or what Cicero has written on this head, in his treatise *De Inventione*, his *Topica*, and second book *De Oratore*. But when they are to prepare a discourse, by which they purpose to convince a judge, or to produce any considerable effect upon an assembly, I would advise them to lay aside their common places, and to think closely of their subject. Demosthenes I dare say, consulted none of the loci, when he was

inciting the Athenians to take arms against Philip; and where Cicero has had recourse to them, his orations are so much the worse on that account.

I proceed to what is of more real use, to point out the assistance that can be given, not with respect to the invention, but with respect to the disposition, and conduct of arguments.

Two different methods may be used by orators in the conduct of their reasoning; the terms of art for which are, the analytic, and the synthetic method. The analytic is, when the orator conceals his intention concerning the point he is to prove, till he has gradually brought his hearers to the designed conclusion. They are led on step by step, from one known truth to another, till the conclusion be stolen upon them, as the natural consequence of a chain of propositions. As, for instance, when one intending to prove the being of a God, sets out with observing that every thing which we see in the world has had a beginning; that whatever has a beginning, must have had a prior cause; that in human productions, art shown in the effect necessarily infers design in the cause; and proceeds leading you on from one cause to another, till you arrive at one supreme first cause, from whom is derived all the order and design visible in his works. This is much the same with the Socratic method, by which that philosopher silenced the sophists of his age. It is a very artful method of reasoning; may be carried on with much beauty,

and is proper to be used when the hearers are much prejudiced against any truth, and by imperceptible steps must be led to conviction.

But there are few subjects that will admit this method, and not many occasions on which it is proper to be employed. The mode of reasoning most generally used, and most suited to the train of popular speaking, is what is called the synthetic; when the point to be proved is fairly laid down, and one argument after another is made to bear upon it, till the hearers be fully convinced.

Now, in all arguing, one of the first things to be attended to is, among the various arguments which may occur upon a cause, to make a proper selection of such as appear to one's self the most solid; and to employ these as the chief means of persuasion. Every speaker should place himself in the situation of a hearer, and think how he would be affected by those reasons, which he purposes to employ for persuading others. For he must not expect to impose on mankind by mere arts of speech. They are not so easily imposed on, as public speakers are sometimes apt to think. Shrewdness and sagacity are found among all ranks; and the speaker may be praised for his fine discourse, while yet the hearers are not persuaded of the truth of any one thing he has uttered.

Supposing the arguments properly chosen, it is evident that their effect will, in some measure, depend on the right arrangement of them; so as

they shall not jostle and embarrass one another; but give mutual aid; and bear with the fairest and fullest direction on the point in view. Concerning this, the following rules may be taken:

In the first place, avoid blending arguments confusedly together, that are of a separate nature. All arguments whatever are directed to prove one or other of these three things; that something is true; that it is morally right or fit; or that it is profitable and good. These make the three great subjects of discussion among mankind; truth, duty, and interest. But the arguments directed towards either of them are generically distinct; and he who blends them all under one topic, which he calls his argument, as, in sermons, especially, is too often done, will render his reasoning indistinct, and inelegant. Suppose, for instance, that I am recommending to an audience benevolence, or the love of our neighbour; and that I take my first argument, from the inward satisfaction which a benevolent temper affords; my second, from the obligation which the example of Christ lays upon us to this duty; and my third, from its tendency to procure us the good-will of all around us; my arguments are good, but I have arranged them wrong: for my first and third arguments are taken from considerations of interest, internal peace, and external advantages; and between these, I have introduced one, which rests wholly upon duty. I should have kept those classes of arguments,

which are addressed to different principles in human nature, separate and distinct.

In the second place, with regard to the different degrees of strength in arguments, the general rule is, to advance in the way of climax, "*ut augeatur semper, & increascit oratio.*" This especially is to be the course, when the speaker has a clear cause, and is confident that he can prove it fully. He may then adventure to begin with feebler arguments; rising gradually, and not putting forth his whole strength till the last, when he can trust to his making a successful impression on the minds of hearers, prepared by what has gone before. But this rule is not to be always followed. For, if he distrusts his cause, and has but one material argument on which to lay the stress, putting less confidence in the rest, in this case, it is often proper for him to place this material argument in the front; to preoccupy the hearers early, and make the strongest effort at first; that, having removed prejudices, and disposed them to be favorable, the rest of his reasoning may be listened to with more docility. When it happens, that amidst a variety of arguments, there are one or two which we are sensible are more inconclusive than the rest, and yet proper to be used, Cicero advises to place these in the middle, as a station less conspicuous than either the beginning, or the end, of the train of reasoning.

In the third place, when our arguments are strong and satisfactory, the more they are distinguished

and treated apart from each other, the better. Each can then bear to be brought out by itself, placed in its full light, amplified and rested upon. But when our arguments are doubtful, and only of the presumptive kind, it is safer to throw them together in a crowd, and to run them into one another: "*ut quæ sunt natura imbecilla,*" as Quinctilian speaks, "*mutuo auxilio sustineantur;*" that though infirm of themselves, they may serve mutually to prop each other. He gives a good example, in the case of one who was accused of murdering a relation, to whom he was heir. Direct proof was wanting; but, "you expected a succession, and a great succession; you was in distressed circumstances; you was pushed to the utmost by your creditors; you had offended your relation, who had made you his heir; you knew that he was just then intending to alter his will; no time was to be lost. Each of these particulars, by itself," says the author, "is inconclusive; but when they were assembled in one groupe, they have effect."

Of the distinct amplification of one persuasive argument, we have a most beautiful example, in Cicero's oration for Milo. The argument is taken, from a circumstance of time. Milo was candidate for the consulship; and Clodius was killed a few days before the election. He asks, if any one could believe that Milo would be mad enough, at such a critical time, by a most odious assassination, to alienate from himself the favor

of the people, whose suffrages he was so anxiously courting? This argument, the moment it is suggested, appears to have considerable weight. But it was not enough, simply to suggest it, it could bear to be dwelt upon, and brought out into full light. The orator, therefore, draws a just and striking picture of that solicitous attention with which candidates, at such a season, always found it necessary to cultivate the good opinion of the people. "Quo tempore," says he, "(scio enim quam timida sit ambitio, quantaque & quam sollicita, cupiditas consulatus) omnia, non modo quæ reprehendi palam, sed etiam quæ obscure cogitari possunt, timemus. Rumorem, fabulam fictam & falsam, perhorrescimus; ora omnium atque oculos intuemur. Nihil enim est tam tenerum, tam aut fragile aut flexibile, quam voluntas erga nos sensusque civium, qui non modo improbitati irascuntur candidatorum, sed etiam in recte factis sæpe fastidiunt." From all which he most justly concludes, "Hunc diem igitur campi, speratum atque exoptatum, sibi proponens Milo, cruentis manibus, scelus atque facinus præ se ferens, ad illa centuriarum auspicia veniebat? Quam hoc in illo minimum credibile! * " But though such

* "Well do I know to what length the timidity goes of such as are candidates for public offices, and how many anxious cares and attentions, a canvass for the consulship necessarily carries along with it. On such an occasion, we are afraid not only of what we may openly be reproached with, but of what others may think of us in secret.

amplification as this be extremely beautiful, I must add a caution.

In the fourth place, against extending arguments too far, and multiplying them too much. This serves rather to render a cause suspected, than to give it weight. An unnecessary multiplicity of arguments, both burdens the memory, and detracts from the weight of that conviction, which a few well chosen arguments carry. It is to be observed too, that in the amplification of arguments, a diffuse and spreading method, beyond the bounds of reasonable illustration, is always enfeebling. It takes off greatly from that "vis & acumen," which should be the distinguishing character of the argumentative part of a discourse. When a speaker dwells long on a favorite argument, and seeks to turn it into every possible light, it almost always happens, that, fatigued with the effort, he loses the spirit with which he set out; and concludes with feebleness,

"The slightest rumor, the most improbable tale that can be
"devised to our prejudice, alarms and disconcerts us. We
"study the countenance, and the looks, of all around us.
"For nothing is so delicate, so frail, and uncertain, as the
"public favor. Our fellow citizens not only are justly of-
"fended with the vices of candidates, but even on occasion
"of meritorious actions, are apt to conceive capricious dis-
"gusts. Is there then the least credibility, that Milo, after
"having so long fixed his attention on the important and
"wished for day of election, would dare to have any thoughts
"of presenting himself before the august assembly of the
"people, as a murderer and assassin, with his hands imbrued
"in blood?"

feebleness, what he began with force. There is a proper temperance in reasoning, as there is in other parts of a discourse.

After due attention given to the proper arrangement of arguments, what is next requisite for their success, is to express them in such a style, and to deliver them in such a manner, as shall give them full force. On these heads I must refer the reader to the directions I have given in treating of style, in former lectures; and to the directions I am afterwards to give concerning pronunciation and delivery.

I proceed, therefore, next, to another essential part of discourse which I mentioned as the fifth in order, that is, the pathetic; in which, if any where, eloquence reigns, and exerts its power. I shall not, in beginning this head, take up time in combating the scruples of those who have moved a question, whether it be consistent with firmness and candor in a public speaker, to address the passions of his audience? This is a question about words alone, and which common sense easily determines. In inquiries after mere truth, in matters of simple information and instruction, there is no question that the passions have no concern, and that all attempts to move them are absurd. Wherever conviction is the object, it is the understanding alone that is to be applied to. It is by argument and reasoning, that one man attempts to satisfy another of what is true, or right, or just; but if persuasion be the object, the case is changed. In all

that relates to practice, there is no man who seriously means to persuade another, but addresses himself to his passions more or less; for this plain reason, that passions are the great springs of human action. The most virtuous man, in treating of the most virtuous subject, seeks to touch the heart of him to whom he speaks; and makes no scruple to raise his indignation at injustice, or his pity to the distressed, though pity and indignation be passions.

In treating of this part of eloquence, the ancients made the same sort of attempt as they employed with respect to the argumentative part, in order to bring rhetoric into a more perfect system. They inquired metaphysically into the nature of every passion; they gave a definition, and a description of it; they treated of its causes, its effects, and its concomitants; and thence deduced rules for working upon it. Aristotle in particular has, in his treatise upon rhetoric discussed the nature of the passions with much profoundness and subtilty; and what he has written on that head, may be read with no small profit, as a valuable piece of moral philosophy; but whether it will have any effect in rendering an orator more pathetic, is to me doubtful. It is not, I am afraid, any philosophical knowledge of the passions, that can confer this talent. We must be indebted for it to nature, to a certain strong and happy sensibility of mind; and one may be a most thorough adept in all the speculative knowledge that can be acquired concerning

the passions, and remain at the same time a cold and dry speaker. The use of rules and instructions on this, or any other part of oratory, is not to supply the want of genius, but to direct it where it is found, into its proper channel; to assist it in exerting itself with most advantage, and to prevent the errors and extravagancies into which it is sometimes apt to run. On the head of the pathetic, the following directions appear to me to be useful.

The first is to consider carefully, whether the subject admit the pathetic, and render it proper; and if it does, what part of the discourse is the most proper for attempting it. To determine these points belongs to good sense; for it is evident, that there are many subjects which admit not the pathetic at all, and that even in those that are susceptible of it, an attempt to excite the passions in the wrong place, may expose an orator to ridicule. All that can be said in general is, that if we expect any emotion which we raise to have a lasting effect, we must be careful to bring over to our side, in the first place, the understanding and judgment. The hearers must be convinced that there are good and sufficient grounds, for their entering with warmth into the cause. They must be able to justify to themselves the passion which they feel; and remain satisfied that they are not carried away by mere delusion. Unless their minds be brought into this state, although they may have been heated by the orator's discourse, yet, as

soon as he ceases to speak, they will resume their ordinary tone of thought; and the emotion which he has raised will die entirely away. Hence most writers assign the pathetic to the peroration or conclusion, as its natural place; and no doubt, all other things being equal, this is the impression that one would chuse to make last, leaving the minds of the hearers warmed with the subject, after argument and reasoning had produced their full effect: but wherever it is introduced, I must advise,

In the second place, never to set apart a head of discourse in form, for raising any passion; never give warning that you are about to be pathetic; and call upon your hearers, as is sometimes done, to follow you in the attempt. This almost never fails to prove a refrigerant to passion. It puts the hearers immediately on their guard, and disposes them for criticizing, much more than for being moved. The indirect method of making an impression is likely to be more successful; when you seize the critical moment that is favorable to emotion, in whatever part of the discourse it occurs; and then, after due preparation, throw in such circumstances, and present such glowing images, as may kindle their passions before they are aware. This can often be done more happily, in a few sentences inspired by natural warmth, than in a long and studied address.

In the third place, It is necessary to observe, that there is a great difference between showing

the hearers that they ought to be moved, and actually moving them. This distinction is not sufficiently attended to especially by preachers, who, if they have a head in their sermon to show how much we are bound to be grateful to God, or to be compassionate to the distressed, are apt to imagine this to be a pathetic part. Now, all the arguments you produce to show me, why it is my duty, why it is reasonable and fit, that I should be moved in a certain way, go no further than to dispose or prepare me for entering into such an emotion; but they do not actually excite it. To every emotion or passion, nature has adapted a set of corresponding objects; and, without setting these before the mind; it is not in the power of any orator to raise that emotion. I am warmed with gratitude, I am touched with compassion, not when a speaker shows me that these are noble dispositions, and that it is my duty to feel them; or when he exclaims against me for my indifference and coldness. All this time, he is speaking only to my reason or conscience. He must describe the kindness and tenderness of my friend; he must set before me the distress suffered by the person for whom he would interest me; then, and not till then my heart begins to be touched, my gratitude or my compassion begin to flow. The foundation, therefore, of all successful execution in the way of pathetic oratory is, to paint the object of that passion which we wish to raise, in the most natural and striking manner; to describe it with such

circumstances as are likely to awaken it in the minds of others. Every passion is most strongly excited by sensation; as anger, by the feeling of an injury, or the presence of the injurer. Next to the influence of sense, is that of memory; and next to memory, is the influence of the imagination. Of this power, therefore, the orator must avail himself, so as to strike the imagination of the hearers with circumstances which, in lustre and steadiness, resemble those of sensation and remembrance. In order to accomplish this,

In the fourth place, the only effectual method is, to be moved yourselves. There are a thousand interesting circumstances suggested by real passion, which no art can imitate, and no refinement can supply. There is obviously a contagion among the passions.

*Ut ridentibus arrident, sic flentibus adflent,
Humani vultus.*

The internal emotion of the speaker adds a pathos to his words, his looks, his gestures, and his whole manner, which exerts a power almost irresistible over those who hear him *.

* “ Quid enim aliud est causæ ut lugentes, utique in re-
“ centi dolore, disertissime quædam exclamare videantur; &
“ ira nonnunquam in indoctis quoque eloquentiam faciat; quam
“ quod illis inest vis mentis, & veritas ipsa morum? quare in
“ iis quæ verisimilia esse volumus, simus ipsi similes eorum
“ qui vere patiuntur, affectibus; & a tali animo proficiscatur
“ oratio qualem facere judicem volet. — Afficiamur antequam
“ afficere conemur.”

QUINCT. Lib. 6.

But on this point, though the most material of all, I shall not now insist, as I have often had occasion before to show, that all attempts towards becoming pathetic, when we are not moved ourselves, expose us to certain ridicule.

Quintilian, who discourses upon the subject with much good sense, takes pains to inform us of the method which he used, when he was a public speaker, for entering into those passions which he wanted to excite in others; setting before his own imagination what he calls, “phantasiæ” or “visiones,” strong pictures of the distress or indignities which they had suffered, whose cause he was to plead, and for whom he was to interest his hearers; dwelling upon these, and putting himself in their situation, till he was affected by a passion similar to that which the persons themselves had felt *. To this method he attributes all the success he ever had in public speaking; and there can be no doubt that whatever tends to increase an orator’s sensibility, will add greatly to his pathetic powers.

* “ Ut hominem occisum querar; non omnia quæ in re
 “ presenti accidisse credibile est, in oculis habebo? Non per-
 “ cussor ille subitus erumpet? non expavescet circumventus?
 “ exclamabit, vel rogabit, vel fugiet? non ferientem, non
 “ concidentem videbo? non animo sanguis, & pallor, & gemitus,
 “ extremus denique expirantis hiatus, infidet? — Ubi
 “ vero miseratione opus erit, nobis ea de quibus querimur
 “ accidisse credamus, atque id animo nostro persuadeamus.
 “ Nos illi simus, quos gravia, indigna, tristia, passos quera-
 “ mur. Nec agamus rem quasi alienam; sed assumamus

In the fifth place, it is necessary to attend to the proper language of the passions. We should observe in what manner any one expresses himself who is under the power of a real and a strong passion; and we shall always find his language unaffected and simple. It may be animated, indeed, with bold and strong figures, but it will have no ornament or finery. He is not at leisure to follow out the play of imagination. His mind being wholly seized by one object which has heated it, he has no other aim, but to represent that, in all its circumstances, as strongly as he feels it. This must be the style of the orator, when he would be pathetic; and this will be his style, if he speaks from real feeling; bold, ardent, simple. No sort of description will then succeed, but what is written "fervente calamo." If he stay till he can work up his style, and polish and adorn it, he will infallibly cool his own ardor; and then he will touch the heart no more. His composition will become frigid; it will be the language of one who describes, but who does not feel. We must take notice, that there is a great difference between painting to the imagination, and painting to the heart. The one may be done coolly, and at leisure: the other, must always be rapid and ardent. In the former, art and labor may be

"parumper illum dolorem. Ita dicemus quæ in simili nostro
"casu dicturi essemus."

Lib. 6.

suffered to appear; in the latter, no effect can follow, unless it seem to be the work of nature only.

In the sixth place, avoid interweaving any thing of a foreign nature with the pathetic part of a discourse. Beware of all digressions, which may interrupt or turn aside the natural course of the passion, when once it begins to rise and swell. Sacrifice all beauties, however bright and showy, which would divert the mind from the principal object, and which would amuse the imagination, rather than touch the heart. Hence comparisons are always dangerous, and generally quite improper, in the midst of passion. Beware even of reasoning unseasonably; or, at least, of carrying on a long and subtle train of reasoning, on occasions when the principal aim is to excite warm emotions.

In the last place, never attempt prolonging the pathetic too much. Warm emotions are too violent to be lasting *. Study the proper time of making a retreat; of making a transition from the passionate to the calm tone; in such a manner,

* “Nunquam debet esse longa miseratio; nam cum veros
 “dolores mitiget tempus, citius evanescat, necesse est illa,
 “quam dicendo effinximus, imago: in qua, si moramur,
 “lacrymis fatigatur auditor, & requiescit, & ab illo quem
 “ceperat impetu, in rationem redit. Non patiamur igitur
 “frigescere hoc opus; & affectum, cum ad summum perduxerimus,
 “relinquamus; nec speremus fore, ut aliena mala quisquam diu ploret.”

QUINCT. L. 6.

however, as to descend without falling, by keeping up the same strain of sentiment that was carried on before, though now expressing it with more moderation. Above all things, beware of straining passion too far; of attempting to raise it to unnatural heights. Preserve always a due regard to what the hearers will bear; and remember, that he who stops not at the proper point; who attempts to carry them farther, in passion, than they will follow him, destroys his whole design. By endeavouring to warm them too much, he takes the most effectual method of freezing them completely.

Having given these rules concerning the pathetic, I shall give one example from Cicero, which will serve to illustrate several of them, particularly the last. It shall be taken from his last oration against Verres, wherein he describes the cruelty exercised by Verres, when governor of Sicily, against one Gavius, a Roman citizen. This Gavius had made his escape from prison, into which he had been thrown by the governor; and when just embarking at Messina, thinking himself now safe, had uttered some threats, that when he had once arrived at Rome, Verres should hear of him, and be brought to account for having put a Roman citizen in chains. The chief magistrate of Messina, a creature of Verres's, instantly apprehends him, and gives information of his threatenings. The behaviour of Verres, on this occasion, is described in the most

picturesque manner, and with all the colors which were proper, in order to excite against him the public indignation. He thanks the magistrate of Messina for his diligence. Filled with rage, he comes into the forum; orders Gavius to be brought forth, the executioners to attend, and against the laws, and contrary to the well-known privileges of a Roman citizen, commands him to be stripped naked, bound, and scourged publicly in a cruel manner. Cicero then proceeds thus; “cæde-
“batur virgis, in medio foro Messanæ, civis
“Romanus, judices!” every word rises above another in describing this flagrant enormity; and, “judices,” is brought out at the end with the greatest propriety: “cædebatur virgis, in medio
“foro Messanæ, civis Romanus, judices! cum
“interea, nullus gemitus, nulla vox alia istius
“miseri, inter dolorem crepitumque plagarum
“audiebatur, nisi hæc, civis Romanus sum. Hac
“se commemoratione civitatis, omnia verbera
“depulsurum a corpore arbitrabatur. Is non
“modo hoc non perfecit, ut virgarum vim de-
“precaretur, sed cum imploraret sæpius usurpa-
“retque nomen civis, crux, crux, inquam, infelici
“ & ærumnoso, qui nunquam istam potesta-
“tem viderat, comparabatur. O nomen dulce
“libertatis! O jus eximium nostræ civitatis! O
“lex Porcia, legesque Sempronæ! — Huccine
“omnia tandem reciderunt, ut civis Romanus,
“in provincia populi Romani, in oppido fæde-
“ratorum, ab eo qui beneficio populi Romani

“ fasces & secures haberet, deligatus, in fóro,
“ virgis cæderetur *?”

Nothing can be finer, nor better conducted than this passage. The circumstances are well chosen for exciting both the compassion of his hearers for Gavius, and their indignation against Verres. The style is simple; and the passionate exclamation, the address to liberty and the laws, is well-timed, and in the proper style of passion. The orator goes on to exaggerate Verres's cruelty still farther, by another very striking circumstance. He ordered a gibbet to be

* “ In the midst of the market-place of Messina a Roman
“ citizen, O judges! was cruelly scourged with rods; when,
“ in the mean time, amidst the noise of the blows which he
“ suffered, no voice, no complaint of this unhappy man was
“ heard, except this exclamation, remember that I am a
“ Roman citizen! By pleading this privilege of his birth-
“ right, he hoped to have stopped the strokes of the execu-
“ tioner. But his hopes were vain; for, so far was he
“ from being able to obtain thereby any mitigation of his
“ torture, that when he continued to repeat this exclamation,
“ and to plead the rights of a citizen, a cross, a cross, I
“ say, was preparing to be set up for the execution of this
“ unfortunate person, who never before had beheld that in-
“ strument of cruel death. O sacred and honored name of
“ liberty! O boasted and revered privilege of a Roman citi-
“ zen! O ye porcian and Sempronian laws! to this issue
“ have ye all come, that a citizen of Rome, in a province
“ of the Roman empire, within an allied city, should public-
“ ly, in a market-place, be loaded with chains, and beaten
“ with rods, at the command of one who, from the favor
“ of the Roman people alone, derived all his authority and
“ ensigns of power!”

erected for Gavius, not in the common place of execution, but just by the sea-shore, over against the coast of Italy. “Let him,” said he, “who
 “boasts so much of his being a Roman citizen,
 “take a view from his gibbet of his own country.
 “— This base insult over a dying man is the least
 “part of his guilt. It was not Gavius alone that
 “Verres meant to insult; but it was you, O
 “Romans! it was every citizen who now hears
 “me, in the person of Gavius, he scoffed at your
 “rights, and showed in what contempt he held
 “the Roman name, and Roman liberties.”

Hitherto all is beautiful, animated, pathetic; and the model would have been perfect, if Cicero had stopped at this point. But his redundant and florid genius carried him further. He must needs interest, not his hearers only, but the beasts, the mountains, and the stones, against Verres: “*Si hæc non ad cives Romanos, non ad*
 “*amicos nostræ civitatis, non ad eos qui populi*
 “*Romani nomen audissent; denique si non ad*
 “*homines, verum ad bestias; atque ut longius*
 “*progrediar, si in aliqua desertissima solitudine,*
 “*ad faxa & ad scopulos, hæc conqueri & de-*
 “*plorare vellem, tamen omnia muta atque in-*
 “*anima, tanta & tam indigna rerum atrocitate*
 “*commoverentur* *.” This, with all the deference

* “Were I employed in lamenting those instances of an
 “atrocious oppression and cruelty, not among an assembly of
 “Roman citizens, not among the allies of our state, not
 “among those who had ever heard the name of the Roman
 “people, not even among human creatures, but in the midst

due to so eloquent an orator, we must pronounce to be declamatory, not pathetic. This is straining the language of passion too far. Every hearer sees this immediately to be a studied figure of rhetoric; it may amuse him, but instead of inflaming him more, it, in truth, cools his passion. So dangerous it is to give scope to a flowery imagination, when one intends to make a strong and passionate impression.

No other part of discourse remains now to be treated of, except the peroration, or conclusion. Concerning this, it is needless to say much, because it must vary so considerably, according to the strain of the preceding discourse. Sometimes, the whole pathetic part comes in most properly at the peroration. Sometimes, when the discourse has been entirely argumentative, it is fit to conclude with summing up the arguments, placing them in one view, and leaving the impression of them, full and strong, on the mind of the audience. For the great rule of a conclusion, and what nature obviously suggests, is, to place that last on which we chuse that the strength of our cause should rest.

In sermons, inferences from what has been said, make a common conclusion. With regard

“ of the brute creation; and to go farther, were I pouring
“ forth my lamentations to the stones, and to the rocks, in
“ some remote and desert wilderness, even those mute and in-
“ animate beings would, at the recital of such shocking indigni-
“ ties, be thrown into commotion.”

to these, care should be taken, not only that they rise naturally, but (what is less commonly attended to), that they should so much agree with the strain of sentiment throughout the discourse, as not to break the unity of the sermon. For inferences, how justly soever they may be deduced from the doctrine of the text, yet have a bad effect, if, at the conclusion of a discourse, they introduce some subject altogether new, and turn off our attention from the main object to which the preacher had directed our thoughts. They appear, in this case, like excrescences jutting out from the body, which had better have been wanted; and tend to enfeeble the impression, which the composition, as a whole, is calculated to make.

The most eloquent of the French, perhaps indeed, of all modern orators, Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, terminates in a very moving manner his funeral oration on the great prince of Condé, with this return upon himself, and his old age:

“Accept, O prince! these last efforts of a voice
“which you once well knew. With you, all
“my funeral discourses are now to end. Instead
“of deploring the death of others, henceforth,
“it shall be my study to learn from you, how
“my own may be blessed. Happy, if warned by
“those grey hairs of the account which I must
“soon give of my ministry, I reserve, solely,
“for that flock whom I ought to feed with the
“word of life, the feeble remains of a voice

“ which now trembles, and of an ardor, which
“ is now on the point of being extinct *.”

In all discourses, it is a matter of importance to hit the precise time of concluding, so as to bring our discourse just to a point; neither ending abruptly and unexpectedly; nor disappointing the expectation of the hearers, when they look for our having done; and continuing to hover round and round the conclusion, till they become heartily tired of us. We should endeavour to go off with a good grace; not to end with a languishing and drawling sentence; but to close with dignity and spirit, that we may leave the minds of the hearers warm; and dismiss them with a favorable impression of the subject, and of the speaker.

* “ Agréez ces derniers efforts d’une voix qui vous fut
“ connue. Vous mettez fin à tous ces discours. Au lieu de
“ déplorer la mort des autres, grand prince ! dorénavant je
“ veux apprendre de vous, à rendre la mienne sainte. Heu-
“ reux, si averti par ces cheveux blancs du compte que je
“ dois rendre de mon administration, je réserve au troupeau
“ que je dois nourrir de la parole de vie, les restes d’une
“ voix qui tombe, & d’une ardeur qui s’éteint.” — These are
the last sentences of that oration: but the whole of the peroration from that passage: “ Venez, peuples, venez maintenant,” &c. though it is too long for insertion, is a great master-piece of pathetic eloquence.

LECTURE XXXIII.

Pronunciation, or Delivery.

HAVING treated of several general heads relating to eloquence, or public speaking, I now proceed to another very important part of the subject yet remaining, that is, pronunciation, or delivery of a discourse. How much stress was laid upon this by the most eloquent of all orators, Demosthenes, appears from a noted saying of his related both by Cicero and Quinctilian; when being asked, what was the first point in oratory? he answered, delivery; and being asked, what was the second? and afterwards, what was the third? he still answered, delivery. There is no wonder, that he should have rated this so high, and that for improving himself in it, he should have employed those assiduous and painful labors, which all the ancients take so much notice of; for, beyond doubt, nothing is of more importance. To superficial thinkers; the management of the voice and gesture, in public speaking, may appear to relate to decoration only, and to be one of the inferior arts of catching

an audience. But this is far from being the case. It is intimately connected with what is, or ought to be, the end of all public speaking, persuasion; and therefore deserves the study of the most grave and serious speakers as much as of those, whose only aim it is to please.

For, let it be considered, whenever we address ourselves to others by words, our intention certainly is to make some impression on those to whom we speak; it is to convey to them our own ideas and emotions. Now the tone of our voice, our looks, and gestures, interpret our ideas and emotions no less than words do; nay, the impression they make on others, is frequently much stronger than any that words can make. We often see that an expressive look, or a passionate cry, unaccompanied by words, convey to others more forcible ideas, and rouse within them stronger passions, than can be communicated by the most eloquent discourse. The signification of our sentiments, made by tones and gestures, has this advantage above that made by words, that it is the language of nature. It is that method of interpreting our mind, which nature has dictated to all, and which is understood by all; whereas, words are only arbitrary, conventional symbols of our ideas: and, by consequence, must make a more feeble impression. So true is this, that, to render words fully significant, they must, almost in every case, receive some aid from the manner of pronunciation and delivery; and he who, in speaking, should employ

bare words without enforcing them by proper tones and accents, would leave us with a faint and indistinct impression, often with a doubtful and ambiguous conception, of what he had delivered. Nay, so close is the connexion between certain sentiments and the proper manner of pronouncing them, that he who does not pronounce them after that manner, can never persuade us, that he believes, or feels, the sentiments themselves. His delivery may be such, as to give the lie to all that he asserts. When Marcus Callidius accused one of an attempt to poison him, but enforced his accusation in a languid manner, and without any warmth or earnestness of delivery, Cicero, who pleaded for the accused person, improved this into an argument of the falsity of the charge, “An tu M. Callidi nisi fingeres, sic ageres?” In Shakspeare’s Richard II. the Duchess of York thus impeaches the sincerity of her husband:

Pleads he in earnest? — Look upon his face;
His eyes do drop no tears, his prayers are in jest;
His words come from his mouth, ours from our breast;
He prays but faintly, and would be deny’d;
We pray with heart and soul. —

But, I believe it is needless to say any more, in order to show the high importance of a good delivery. I proceed, therefore, to such observations as appear to me most useful to be made on this head.

The great objects which every public speaker will naturally have in his eye in forming his delivery, are, first, to speak so as to be fully and easily understood by all who hear him, and next, to speak with grace and force, so as to please and to move his audience. Let us consider what is most important with respect to each of these *.

In order to be fully and easily understood, the four chief requisites are a due degree of loudness of voice; distinctness; slowness, and propriety of pronunciation.

The first attention of every public speaker, doubtless, must be, to make himself be heard by all those to whom he speaks. He must endeavour to fill with his voice, the space occupied by the assembly. This power of voice, it may be thought, is wholly a natural talent. It is so in a good measure; but, however, may receive considerable assistance from art. Much depends for this purpose on the proper pitch, and management of the voice. Every man has three pitches in his voice; the high, the middle, and the low one. The high, is that which he uses in calling aloud to some one at a distance. The low is, when he approaches to a whisper. The middle is, that which he employs in common conversation, and which he should use for ordinary in public discourse. For it is a great mistake,

* On this whole subject, Mr. Sheridan's Lectures on Elocution, are very worthy of being consulted; and several hints are here taken from them.

to imagine that one must take the highest pitch of his voice, in order to be well heard by a great assembly. This is confounding two things which are different, loudness, or strength of sound, with the key, or note on which we speak. A speaker may render his voice louder, without altering the key; and we will always be able to give most body, most persevering force of sound, to that pitch of voice, to which in conversation we are accustomed. Whereas, by setting out on our highest pitch or key, we certainly allow ourselves less compass, and are likely to strain and outrun our voice before we have done. We shall fatigue ourselves, and speak with pain; and whenever a man speaks with pain to himself, he is always heard with pain by his audience. Give the voice therefore full strength and swell of sound: but always pitch it on your ordinary speaking key. Make it a constant rule never to utter a greater quantity of voice, than you can afford without pain to yourselves, and without any extraordinary effort. As long as you keep within these bounds, the other organs of speech will be at liberty to discharge their several offices with ease; and you will always have your voice under command. But whenever you transgress these bounds, you give up the reins, and have no longer any management of it. It is an useful rule too, in order to be well heard, to fix our eye on some of the most distant persons in the assembly, and to consider ourselves as speaking to them. We naturally and

mechanically utter our words with such a degree of strength, as to make ourselves be heard by one to whom we address ourselves, provided he be within the reach of our voice. As this is the case in common conversation, it will hold also in public speaking. But remember, that in public as well as in conversation, it is possible to offend by speaking too loud. This extreme hurts the ear, by making the voice come upon it in rumbling indistinct masses; besides its giving the speaker the disagreeable appearance of one who endeavours to compel assent, by mere vehemence and force of sound.

In the next place, to being well heard, and clearly understood, distinctness of articulation contributes more, perhaps, than mere loudness of sound. The quantity of sound necessary to fill even a large space, is smaller than is commonly imagined; and with distinct articulation, a man of a weak voice will make it reach farther, than the strongest voice can reach without it. To this, therefore, every public speaker ought to pay great attention. He must give every sound which he utters its due proportion, and make every syllable, and even every letter in the word which he pronounces, be heard distinctly; without flurring, whispering, or suppressing any of the proper sounds.

In the third place, in order to articulate distinctly, moderation is requisite with regard to the speed of pronouncing. Precipitancy of speech, confounds all articulation, and all meaning. I

need scarcely observe, that there may be also an extreme on the opposite side. It is obvious, that a lifeless, drawling pronunciation, which allows the minds of the hearers to be always outrunning the speaker, must render every discourse insipid and fatiguing. But the extreme of speaking too fast is much more common, and requires the more to be guarded against, because, when it has grown up into a habit, few errors are more difficult to be corrected. To pronounce with a proper degree of slowness, and with full and clear articulation, is the first thing to be studied by all who begin to speak in public; and cannot be too much recommended to them. Such a pronunciation, gives weight and dignity to their discourse. It is a great assistance to the voice, by the pauses and rests which it allows it more easily to make; and it enables the speaker to swell all his sounds, both with more force, and more music. It assists him also in preserving a due command of himself; whereas a rapid and hurried manner, is apt to excite that flutter of spirits, which is the greatest enemy to all right execution in the way of oratory. “*Promptum fit os,*” says Quinctilian, “*non præceps; moderatum, non lentum.*”

After these fundamental attentions to the pitch and management of the voice, to distinct articulation, and to a proper degree of slowness of speech, what a public speaker must, in the fourth place, study, is, propriety of pronunciation; or the giving to every word, which he utters,

that sound which the most polite usage of the language appropriates to it; in opposition, to broad, vulgar, or provincial pronunciation. This is requisite, both for speaking intelligibly, and for speaking with grace or beauty. Instructions concerning this article, can be given by the living voice only. But there is one observation, which it may not be improper here to make. In the English language, every word which consists of more syllables than one, has one accented syllable. The accent rests sometimes on the vowel, sometimes on the consonant. Seldom, or never, is there more than one accented syllable in any English word, however long; and the genius of the language requires the voice to mark that syllable by a stronger percussive, and to pass more lightly over the rest. Now, having once learned the proper seats of these accents, it is an important rule, to give every word just the same accent in public speaking, as in common discourse. Many persons err in this respect. When they speak in public, and with solemnity, they pronounce the syllables in a different manner from what they do at other times. They dwell upon them, and protract them; they multiply accents on the same word; from a mistaken notion, that it gives gravity and force to their discourse, and adds to the pomp of public declamation. Whereas, this is one of the greatest faults that can be committed in pronunciation; it makes what is called, a theatrical, or mouth-ing manner; and gives an artificial affected air to

speech, which detracts greatly both from its agreeableness, and its impression.

I proceed to treat next of those higher parts of delivery, by studying which, a speaker has something farther in view than merely to render himself intelligible, and seeks to give grace and force to what he utters. These may be comprised under four heads, emphasis, pauses, tones, and gestures. Let me only premise, in general, to what I am to say concerning them, that attention to these articles of delivery is by no means to be confined, as some might be apt to imagine, to the more elaborate, and pathetic parts of a discourse. There is, perhaps, as great attention requisite, and as much skill displayed, in adapting emphases, pauses, tones, and gestures, properly, to calm and plain speaking; and the effect of a just and graceful delivery will, in every part of a subject, be found of high importance for commanding attention, and enforcing what is spoken.

First, let us consider emphasis; by this, is meant a stronger and fuller sound of voice, by which we distinguish the accented syllable of some word, on which we design to lay particular stress, and to show how it affects the rest of the sentence. Sometimes the emphatic word must be distinguished by a particular tone of voice, as well as by a stronger accent. On the right management of the emphasis, depends the whole life and spirit of every discourse. If no emphasis

be placed on any words, not only is discourse rendered heavy and lifeless, but the meaning left often ambiguous. If the emphasis be placed wrong, we pervert and confound the meaning wholly. To give a common instance; such a simple question as this: "Do you ride to town to day?" is capable, of no fewer than four different acceptations, according as the emphasis is differently placed on the words. If it be pronounced thus; do *you* ride to town to-day? the answer may naturally be, no; I send my servant in my stead. If thus; do you *ride* to town to day? Answer, no; I intend to walk. Do you ride *to town* to-day? No; I ride out into the fields. Do you ride to town *to-day*? No; but I shall to-morrow. In like manner, in solemn discourse, the whole force and beauty of an expression often depends on the accented word; and we may present to the hearers quite different views of the same sentiment, by placing the emphasis differently. In the following words of our saviour, observe in what different lights the thought is placed, according as the words are pronounced. "Judas, betrayest thou the son of man with a kiss?" *Betrayest* thou — makes the reproach turn, on the infamy of treachery. *Betrayest thou* — makes it rest, upon Judas's connexion with his master. *Betrayest thou the son of man* — rests it, upon our saviour's personal character and eminence. *Betrayest thou the son of man with a kiss?* turns it, upon his prostituting the signal

of peace and friendship, to the purpose of a mark of destruction.

In order to acquire the proper management of the emphasis, the great rule, and indeed the only rule possible to be given is, that the speaker study to attain a just conception, of the force and spirit of those sentiments which he is to pronounce. For to lay the emphasis with exact propriety, is a constant exercise of good sense, and attention. It is far from being an inconsiderable attainment. It is one of the greatest trials of a true and just taste; and must arise from feeling delicately ourselves, and from judging accurately, of what is fittest to strike the feeling of others. There is as great a difference between a chapter of the bible, or any other piece of plain prose, read by one who places the several emphases every where, with taste and judgment, and by one who neglects or mistakes them, as there is between the same tune played by the most masterly hand, or by the most bungling performer.

In all prepared discourses, it would be of great use, if they were read over or rehearsed in private, with this particular view, to search for the proper emphases before they were pronounced in public; marking, at the same time, with a pen, the emphatical words in every sentence, or at least in the most weighty and affecting parts of the discourse, and fixing them well in memory. Were this attention oftener bestowed, were this part of pronunciation studied

with more exactness, and not left to the moment of delivery, as is commonly done, public speakers, would find their care abundantly repaid, by the remarkable effects which it would produce upon their audience. Let me caution, at the same time, against one error, that of multiplying emphatical words too much. It is only by a prudent reserve in the use of them, that we can give them any weight. If they recur too often; if a speaker attempts to render every thing which he says of high importance, by a multitude of strong emphases, we soon learn to pay little regard to them. To crowd every sentence with emphatical words, is like crowding all the pages of a book with *Italic* characters, which, as to the effect, is just the same with using no such distinctions at all.

Next to emphasis, the pauses in speaking demand attention. These are of two kinds; first, emphatical pauses; and next, such as mark the distinctions of sense. An emphatical pause is made, after something has been said of peculiar moment, and on which we want to fix the hearer's attention. Sometimes, before such a thing is said, we usher it in with a pause of this nature. Such pauses have the same effect, as a strong emphasis; and are subject to the same rules; especially to the caution just now given, of not repeating them too frequently. For as they excite uncommon attention, and of course raise expectation, if the importance of the matter be not fully

answerable to such expectation, they occasion disappointment and disgust.

But the most frequent and the principal use of pauses, is to mark the divisions of the sense, and at the same time to allow the speaker to draw his breath; and the proper and graceful adjustment of such pauses, is one of the most nice and difficult articles in delivery. In all public speaking, the management of the breath requires a good deal of care, so as not to be obliged to divide words from one another, which have so intimate a connexion, that they ought to be pronounced with the same breath, and without the least separation. Many a sentence is miserably mangled and the force of the emphasis totally lost, by divisions being made in the wrong place. To avoid this, every one, while he is speaking, should be very careful to provide a full supply of breath for what he is to utter. It is a great mistake to imagine, that the breath must be drawn, only at the end of a period, when the voice is allowed to fall. It can easily be gathered at the intervals of the period, when the voice is only suspended for a moment; and by this management, one may have always a sufficient stock for carrying on the longest sentences, without improper interruptions.

If any one, in public speaking, shall have formed to himself a certain melody or tune, which requires rest and pauses of its own, distinct from those of the sense, he has for certain contracted one of the worst habits into which a public

speaker can fall. It is the sense which should always rule the pauses of the voice: for wherever there is any sensible suspension of the voice, the hearer is always led to expect somewhat corresponding in the meaning. Pauses in public discourse, must be formed upon the manner in which we utter ourselves in ordinary, sensible conversation; and not upon the stiff artificial manner which we acquire, from reading books according to the common punctuation. The general run of punctuation is very arbitrary; often capricious and false; and dictates an uniformity of tone in the pauses, which is extremely disagreeable: for we are to observe, that to render pauses graceful and expressive, they must not only be made in the right place, but also be accompanied with a proper tone of voice, by which the nature of these pauses is intimated; much more than by the length of them, which can never be exactly measured. Sometimes it is only a slight and simple suspension of voice that is proper; sometimes a degree of cadence in the voice is required; and sometimes that peculiar tone and cadence, which denotes the sentence finished. In all these cases, we are to regulate ourselves, by attending to the manner in which nature teaches us to speak, when engaged in real and earnest discourse with others.

When we are reading or reciting verse there is a peculiar difficulty in making the pauses justly. The difficulty arises from the melody of verse, which dictates to the ear pauses or rests of its

own; and to adjust and compound these properly with the pauses of the sense, so as neither to hurt the ear, nor offend the understanding, is so very nice a matter, that it is no wonder we so seldom meet with good readers of poetry. There are two kinds of pauses that belong to the music of verse; one is, the pause at the end of the line; and the other, the cæsural pause in the middle of it. With regard to the pause at the end of the line, which marks that strain or verse to be finished, rhyme renders this always sensible, and in some measure compels to observe it in our pronunciation. In blank verse, where there is a greater liberty permitted of running the lines into one another, sometimes without any suspension in the sense, it has been made a question, Whether in reading such verse with propriety, any regard at all should be paid to the close of a line? On the stage, where the appearance of speaking in verse should always be avoided, there can, I think, be no doubt, that the close of such lines as make no pause in the sense, should not be rendered perceptible to the ear. But on other occasions, this were improper: for what is the use of melody, or for what end has the poet composed in verse, if in reading his lines, we suppress his numbers; and degrade them, by our pronunciation, into mere prose? We ought, therefore, certainly to read blank verse so, as to make every line sensible to the ear. At the same time in doing so, every appearance of sing-song and tone, must be carefully guarded

against. The close of the line, where it makes no pause in the meaning ought to be marked, not by such a tone as is used in finishing a sentence; but without either letting the voice fall, or elevating it, it should be marked only by such a slight suspension of sound, as may distinguish the passage from one line to another, without injuring the meaning.

The other kind of musical, pause, is that which falls somewhere about the middle of the verse, and divides it into two hemistichs; a pause, not so great as that which belongs to the close of the line, but still sensible to an ordinary ear. This, which is called the *cæsural* pause, in the French heroic verse falls uniformly in the middle of the line. In the English, it may fall after the 4th, 5th, 6th, or 7th syllables in the line, and no other. Where the verse is so constructed, that this *cæsural* pause coincides with the slightest pause or division in the sense, the line can be read easily; as in the two first verses of Mr. Pope's *Messiah*,

Ye nymphs of Solyma! begin the song:
To heav'nly themes sublimer strains belong.

But if it shall happen that words, which have such a strict and intimate connexion, as not to bear even a momentary separation, are divided from one another by this *cæsural* pause, we then feel a sort of struggle between the sense and the sound, which renders it difficult to read such
lines

lines gracefully. The rule of proper pronunciation in such cases is, to regard only the pause which the sense forms; and to read the line accordingly. The neglect of the cæsural pause, may make the line sound somewhat unharmoniously; but the effect would be much worse, if the sense were sacrificed to the sound. For instance, in the following line of Milton,

—————What in me is dark
Illumine; what is low raise and support;

The sense clearly dictates the pause after “illumine,” at the end of the third syllable, which, in reading, ought to be made accordingly; though, if the melody only were to be regarded, “illumine,” should be connected with what follows; and the pause not made till the 4th or 6th syllable. So in the following line of Mr. Pope’s (Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot):

I sit, with sad civility I read.

The ear plainly points out the cæsural pause as falling after “sad,” the 4th syllable. But it would be very bad reading to make any pause there, so as to separate “sad” and “civility.” The sense admits of no other pause than after the second syllable “sit,” which therefore must be the only pause made in the reading.

I proceed to treat next of tones in pronunciation, which are different both from emphasis

and pauses; consisting in the modulation of the voice, the notes or variations of sound which we employ in public speaking. How much of the propriety, the force and grace of discourse, must depend on these, will appear from this single consideration; that to almost every sentiment we utter, more especially to every strong emotion, nature hath adapted some peculiar tone of voice; insomuch, that he who should tell another that he was very angry, or very grieved, in a tone which did not suit such emotions, instead of being believed, would be laughed at. Sympathy is one of the most powerful principles by which persuasive discourse works its effect. The speaker endeavours to transfuse into his hearers his own sentiments and emotions; which he can never be successful in doing, unless he utters them in such a manner as to convince the hearers that he feels them*. The proper language and expression of tones, therefore, deserves to be attentively

* “ All that passes in the mind of man may be reduced to
“ two classes, which I call ideas and emotions. By ideas, I
“ mean all thoughts which rise, and pass in succession in the
“ mind. By emotions, all exertions of the mind in arranging,
“ combining, and separating its ideas, as well as all the effects
“ produced on the mind itself by those ideas, from the more
“ violent agitation of the passions, to the calmer feelings pro-
“ duced by the operation of the intellect and the fancy. In
“ short, thought is the object of the one, internal feeling of
“ the other. That which serves to express the former, I call
“ the language of ideas; and the latter, the language of emo-
“ tions, Words are the signs of the one, tones of the other.

studied by every one who would be a successful orator.

The greatest and most material instruction which can be given for this purpose is, to form the tones of public speaking upon the tones of sensible and animated conversation. We may observe that every man, when he is much in earnest in common discourse, when he is engaged in speaking on some subject which interests him nearly, has an eloquent or persuasive tone and manner. What is the reason of our being often so frigid and unpersuasive in public discourse, but our departing from the natural tone of speaking, and delivering ourselves in an affected artificial manner? Nothing can be more absurd than to imagine, that as soon as one mounts a pulpit, or rises in a public assembly, he is instantly to lay aside the voice with which he expresses himself in private; to assume a new, studied tone, and a cadence altogether foreign to his natural manner. This has vitiated all delivery; this has given rise to cant and tedious monotony, in the different kinds of modern public speaking, especially in the pulpit. Men departed from nature; and sought to give a beauty or force, as they imagined, to their discourse, by substituting certain studied musical

“ Without the use of these two sorts of language, it is impossible to communicate through the ear all that passes in the mind of man.”

SHERIDAN, on the Art of Reading.

tones, in the room of the genuine expressions of sentiment, which the voice carries in natural discourse. Let every public speaker guard against this error. Whether he speak in a private room, or in a great assembly, let him remember that he still speaks. Follow nature: consider how she teaches you to utter any sentiment or feeling of your heart. Imagine a subject of debate started in conversation among grave and wise men, and yourself bearing a share in it. Think after what manner, with what tones and inflexions of voice, you would on such an occasion express yourself, when you was most in earnest, and sought most to be listened to. Carry these with you to the bar, to the pulpit, or to any public assembly; let these be the foundation of your manner of pronouncing there; and you will take the surest method of rendering your delivery both agreeable, and persuasive.

I have said, let these conversation tones be the *foundation* of public pronunciation; for, on some occasions, solemn public speaking requires them to be exalted beyond the strain of common discourse. In a formal studied oration, the elevation of the style, and the harmony of the sentences, prompt, almost necessarily, a modulation of voice more rounded, and bordering more upon music, than conversation admits. This gives rise to what is called, the declaiming manner. But though this mode of pronunciation runs considerably beyond ordinary discourse, yet still it must

have, for its basis, the natural tones of grave and dignified conversation. I must observe, at the same time, that the constant indulgence of a declamatory manner, is not favorable either to good composition, or good delivery; and is in hazard of betraying public speakers into that monotony of tone and cadence, which is so generally complained of. Whereas, he who forms the general run of his delivery upon a speaking manner, is not likely ever to become disagreeable through monotony. He will have the same natural variety in his tones, which a person has in conversation. Indeed, the perfection of delivery requires both these different manners, that of speaking with liveliness and ease, and that of declaiming with stateliness and dignity, to be possessed by one man; and to be employed by him, according as the different parts of his discourse require either the one or the other. This is a perfection which not many attain; the greatest part of public speakers, allowing their delivery to be formed altogether accidentally; according as some turn of voice appears to them most beautiful, or some artificial model has caught their fancy; and acquiring, by this means, a habit of pronunciation, which they can never vary. But the capital direction, which ought never to be forgotten is, to copy the proper tones for expressing every sentiment from those which nature dictates to us, in conversation with others; to speak always with her voice; and not to form to ourselves a fantastic

public manner, from an absurd fancy of its being more beautiful than a natural one *.

It now remains to treat of gesture, or what is called action in public discourse. Some nations animate their words in common conversation, with many more motions of the body than others do. The French and the Italians are, in this respect, much more sprightly than we. But there is no nation, hardly any person so phlegmatic, as not to accompany their words with some actions and gesticulations, on all occasions, when they are much in earnest. It is therefore unnatural in a public speaker, it is inconsistent with that earnestness and seriousness which he ought to show in all affairs of moment, to remain quite unmoved in his outward appearance; and to let the words drop from his mouth, without any expression of meaning, or warmth in his gesture.

The fundamental rule as to propriety of action, is undoubtedly the same with what I gave as to propriety of tone. Attend to the looks and gestures, in which earnestness, indignation, compassion, or any other emotion, discovers itself to most advantage in the common

* “Loquere,” (says an author of the last century, who has written a treatise in verse, *de Gestu & Voce Oratoris*)

— “Loquere; hoc vitium commune, loquatur

“Ut nemo; at tensa declamitet omnia voce.

“Tu loquere, ut mos est hominum; Boas & latrat ille;

“Ille ululat; rudit hic; (fari si talia dignum est)

“Non hominem vox ulla sonat ratione loquentem.”

JOANNES LUCAS, *de Gestu & Voce*, Lib. II. Paris 1675.

intercourse of men; and let these be your model. Some of these looks and gestures are common to all men; and there are also certain peculiarities of manner which distinguish every individual. A public speaker must take that manner which is most natural to himself. For it is here, just as in tones. It is not the business of a speaker to form to himself a certain set of motions and gestures, which he thinks most becoming and agreeable, and to practise these in public, without their having any correspondence to the manner which is natural to him in private. His gestures and motions ought all to carry that kind of expression which nature has dictated to him; and, unless this be the case, it is impossible, by means of any study, to avoid their appearing stiff and forced.

However, although nature must be the groundwork, I admit that there is room in this matter for some study and art. For many persons are naturally ungraceful in the motions which they make; and this ungracefulness might, in part at least, be reformed by application and care. The study of action in public speaking consists chiefly in guarding against awkward and disagreeable motions, and in learning to perform such as are natural to the speaker, in the most becoming manner. For this end, it has been advised by writers on this subject, to practise before a mirror, where one may see, and judge of their own gestures. But I am afraid, persons are not always the best judges of the gracefulness

of their own motions, and one may declaim long enough before a mirror, without correcting any of his faults. The judgment of a friend, whose good taste they can trust, will be found of much greater advantage to beginners, than any mirror they can use. With regard to particular rules concerning action and gesticulation, Quintilian has delivered a great many, in the last chapter of the 11th book of his Institutions; and all the modern writers on this subject have done little else but translate them. I am not of opinion, that such rules, delivered either by the voice or on paper, can be of much use, unless persons saw them exemplified before their eyes*.

* The few following hints only I shall adventure to throw out, in case they may be of any service. When speaking in public, one should study to preserve as much dignity as possible in the whole attitude of the body. An erect posture is generally to be chosen; standing firm, so as to have the fullest and freest command of all his motions; any inclination which is used, should be forwards towards the hearers, which is a natural expression of earnestness. As for the countenance, the chief rule is that it should correspond with the nature of the discourse, and when no particular emotion is expressed, a serious and manly look, is always the best. The eyes should never be fixed close on any one object, but move easily round the audience. In the motions made with the hands, consists the chief part of gesture in speaking. The ancients condemned all motions performed by the left hand alone, but I am not sensible, that these are always offensive, though it is natural for the right hand to be more frequently employed. Warm emotions demand the motion of both hands corresponding together. But whether

I shall only add further on this head, that in order to succeed well in delivery, nothing is more necessary than for a speaker to guard against a certain flutter of spirits, which is peculiarly incident to those who begin to speak in public. He must endeavour above all this to be recollected, and master of himself. For this end, he will find nothing of more use to him, than to study to become wholly engaged in his subject; to be possessed with a sense of its importance or seriousness; to be concerned much more to persuade, than to please. He will generally please most, when pleasing is not his sole nor chief aim. This is the only rational and proper method of raising one's self above that timid and bashful regard to an audience, which is so ready to disconcert a speaker, both as to what he is to say, and as to his manner of saying it.

one gesticulates with one or with both hands, it is an important rule, that all his motions should be free and easy. Narrow and straitened movements are generally ungraceful; for which reason, motions made with the hands are directed to proceed from the shoulder, rather than from the elbow. Perpendicular movements too with the hands, that is, in the straight line up and down, which Shakspeare in Hamlet calls "sawing the air with the hand," are seldom good. Oblique motions are, in general, the most graceful. Too sudden and nimble motions should be likewise avoided. Earnestness can be fully expressed without them. Shakspeare's directions on this head, are full of good sense; "use all gently," says he, "and in the very torrent and tempest of passion, acquire a temperance that may give it smoothness."

I cannot conclude, without an earnest admonition to guard against all affectation, which is the certain ruin of good delivery. Let your manner, whatever it is, be your own; neither imitated from another, nor assumed upon some imaginary model, which is unnatural to you. Whatever is native, even though accompanied with several defects, yet is likely to please; because it shows us a man; because it has the appearance of coming from the heart. Whereas a delivery, attended with several acquired graces and beauties, if it be not easy and free, if it betray the marks of art and affectation, never fails to disgust. To attain any extremely correct, and perfectly graceful delivery, is what few can expect; so many natural talents being requisite to concur in forming it. But to attain, what as to the effect is very little inferior, a forcible and persuasive manner, is within the power of most persons; if they will only unlearn false and corrupt habits; if they will allow themselves to follow nature, and will speak in public, as they do in private, when they speak in earnest, and from the heart. If one has naturally any gross defects in his voice or gestures, he begins at the wrong end, if he attempts at reforming them, only when he is to speak in public. He should begin with rectifying them, in his private manner of speaking; and then carry to the public the right habit he has formed. For when a speaker is engaged in a public discourse, he should not be then employing his attention about his manner,

or thinking of his tones and his gestures. If he be so employed, study and affectation will appear. He ought to be then quite in earnest; wholly occupied with his subject; and his sentiments; leaving nature, and previously formed habits, to prompt and suggest his manner of delivery.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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THE HISTORY OF A DISCOVERY

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to be regretted that the discovery of the
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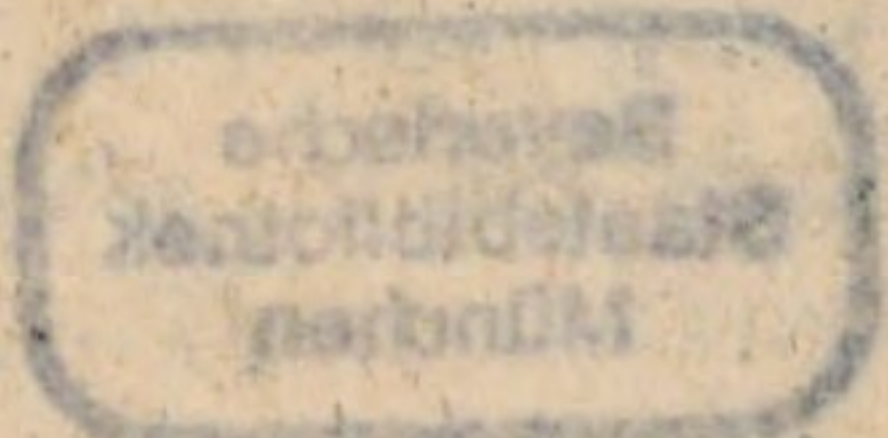
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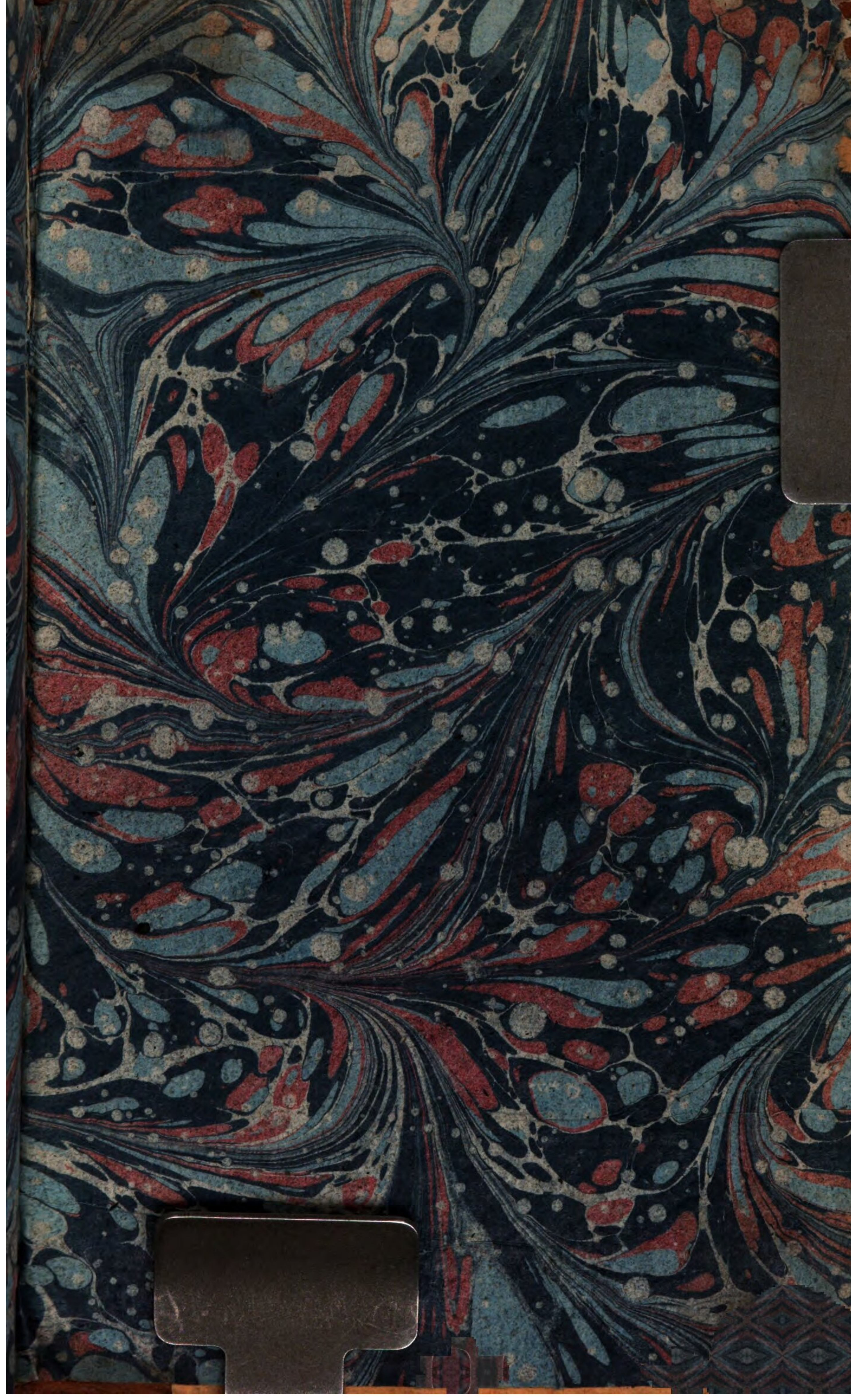
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